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# VERSES

BY

CLIFFORD PHILLIPS

PRIVATELY PRINTED

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PHILADELPHIA, PA.

1913



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## DEDICATION

THE world can well dispense with a book of rhymes written by the average versifier. There seems no real necessity for a book like this: its author—who is hardly entitled to be classed among the average versifiers—does wrong, no doubt, in issuing it. Yet these rhymes are not actually intended for the world at large, but only, numerically speaking, for an insignificant portion of it—the volume, in fact, having been designed for the writer's own amusement and the amusement also of a few, a very few of his most patient and most friendly acquaintances. Such being the case, the remarks made here need not take on too apologetical a turn. But one in a preface must not be unduly discursive. So now for the dedication. Dedication! Is it necessary? To whom should it be? Here comes trouble.

When an amateur in the literary line writes a book, particularly a book of poetry, it is customary to dedicate it to somebody; he who has compiled for publication this volume of (alleged) poems experiences a difficulty in observing such a custom. In the course of more than fifty years—having passed, some time ago, the half-century mark on life's way—the writer has made some friends and possibly some enemies; at first he could scarcely tell to which one in the former or to which one in the latter class he might with the greater propriety inscribe the comparatively few productions of his muse that seemed from certain associations, rather than from any supposed merits, to be worth presenting.



A friend (not a deadly foe, as would naturally be surmised) once advised the writer to bring out his verses in book form; the writer, however, is alone responsible for this publication, it is not his intention to shift the blame on any one else; but that kindly friend's well-meant and unforgotten advice (though very likely it would not have been followed had it conflicted with the writer's purpose) suggested a way out of the dedicatory quandary. To this one, then, who once showed a passing interest in his effusions, it seems somewhat suitable to dedicate a collection of rhymes intended for distribution among those of the writer's acquaintances and friends likeliest, in his opinion, to take an interest in at least a few of the perhaps too many rhythmical compositions that have been gathered.

And so this book of verses, composed in some of the infrequent leisure intervals of a more or less busy existence, extending over a period of time commencing with the year 1874 and closing with this of 1912, is dedicated to the one who first suggested it—that is, to Maud.

PHILADELPHIA, DECEMBER 31, 1912.



# CONTENTS

	PAGE
Dedication	
Dedicatory Verses .....	19
In the Starlight. Published in "Fireside Companion," Janu- ary 22, 1877 .....	21
One Day. Written in 1877 .....	21
Remembrance. Published in "Munro's Girls and Boys of America," February 10, 1877 .....	22
At Early Morning Time. "The Boomerang," July, 1885 ..	23
Retrospection. "Munro's Girls and Boys of America," Feb- ruary 17, 1877 .....	24
The Lament of a Village Poet. Written in 1876 .....	24
Free Agency .....	26
I've ever Loved. Published in "Odd Fellows' Siftings," May, 1886 .....	27
Factory Life. Written in 1877 .....	29
Dolly's Album. Written in 1876 .....	29
Dolly's Holly. Written in 1876 .....	31
My Doings. Written in 1883 .....	32
Discreet .....	34
A Mild Homily on Drink .....	34
Stars. Published in "The Orpheum News," Feb. 17, 1908.	35
Art. [An inspirational poem.] .....	36
Florabella Fontaine .....	37
Flossie Friskoe .....	38
Considerate .....	39
Queen of the Corps de Ballet .....	40
Uncommunicative .....	40
Actor McGrane. Published in "The Orpheum News," Oct. 19, 1908 .....	41
A Question. Published in "The Orpheum News," March 30, 1908 .....	42
Our Erstwhile Friends .....	43
An Appointment .....	43
Vaudeville .....	44
An Averment .....	45

	PAGE
Beyond Control .....	46
The Rejuvenescence of An Illinois Peach .....	46
Atlantic City. Published in "Public Ledger," July 23, 1912.	48
Opportunity .....	48
St. Valentine. Published February 12, 1902 *	49
A Name .....	49
To the Day's Enthroned Saint. Published February 13, 1906.	50
Memories .....	50
A Needed Girl .....	51
Themic Variety .....	51
Two Souls .....	52
Boldness .....	52
Adaline .....	53
A Bold Declaration. Published February 14, 1907 .....	53
This Day .....	54
Fate's Book .....	54
Her Smile .....	54
Summer in Town. Published July 11, 1907 .....	55
Handicapped. Published April 7, 1908 .....	56
An Interruption. Published October 3, 1908 .....	57
A Billion. Published March 13, 1908 .....	58
Clotilda. Published September 28, 1904 .....	58
Woman. Published November 7, 1906 .....	59
Vulnerable Man. Published October 24, 1906 .....	59
Men's Hearts .....	60
Her Heart .....	61
Sustaining a Reputation .....	61
An Invitation. Written in 1900 .....	62
A Strange Mystery .....	62
I'll Sigh at Times. Written in 1898 .....	63
Indetermination .....	64
A Sensible Girl .....	64
A Poet's Theme .....	65
My Age .....	67
A Good Excuse .....	68
Tell Me .....	69
O Supposing! .....	69

\* Most of the verses printed heretofore originally appeared in "The Evening Bulletin" of Philadelphia.

# CONTENTS.

vii

	PAGE
Night's Witching Hour .....	69
Break of Day .....	69
A Challenge .....	69
Not a Fatal Malady. Published December 4, 1907 .....	70
Stay .....	70
Unutterable Love .....	71
Unuttered Thoughts .....	71
"What's In a Name? .....	72
The Bachelor's Side Of It. Published June 29, 1904 .....	73
Danger .....	73
An Elderly Bachelor's Chances .....	74
Bestirring One's Self .....	75
Epistolic Dissonance. Written in 1876 .....	76
Poetry. Published May 16, 1907 .....	78
Jane Brown .....	79
Sadie Austin .....	80
Friend Ferdinand .....	81
A Lesson .....	83
The Right Bait .....	84
Repartee .....	84
Practice. Published August 2, 1909 .....	85
Imagination. Published December 21, 1909 .....	86
A Foolish Question .....	86
Forebodings .....	87
My Finish .....	87
On The Beach .....	88
At The Shore .....	89
'Tween Sales .....	90
In Doubt. Published December 5, 1904 .....	90
The Wooing Of It .....	91
A Plain Statement .....	92
Diplomacy .....	92
True Valor .....	92
Something Learned .....	93
Curbstone Musings. [A purposeful poem.] Written in 1884. .....	94
Fawcett's Tree .....	96
Dreams. Published October 14, 1910 .....	97
The Ship of State .....	97
A Mystery .....	98
The Friday Evening Reading Club. Written in May, 1883 ..	99



	PAGE
The Task. Written in October, 1883 .....	103
Platonic Friendship. Published November 17, 1904 .....	110
Aeronautics .....	111
To-morrow .....	111
Regarding Love. Written in 1911 .....	112
Nineteen-Six. Published December 27, 1906 .....	114
Outdoors .....	114
The Parting and The Coming Guest. Published Dec. 31, 1909.	115
Spring. Published April 2, 1908 .....	115
Springtime. Published April 4, 1905 .....	116
A New World .....	116
Spring's Reign .....	117
A Spring Day .....	118
A Broken Resolution. Published May 6, 1909 .....	118
Maybelle. Published September 16, 1903 .....	119
Beside the Sea. Published November 10, 1902 .....	119
A Memory. Published March 10, 1908 .....	120
A Day Recalled .....	121
To Dorothy .....	122
Childhood .....	123
In a City Square .....	124
Rittenhouse Square .....	125
Minor Mishaps .....	126
Riches .....	127
Life's Hours .....	127
A Little Critic .....	128
Our Outing .....	129
Chums .....	129
The Lesson. Published in "Public Ledger," Aug. 19, 1911...	131
Happiness .....	132
Silent Speech. Published October 2, 1907 .....	132
Some Day .....	133
Awaiting Her Coming .....	133
The Earth .....	134
A Deathless Song .....	134
A Cheering Thought .....	135
Foreordained .....	135
Heaven's Gift .....	136
A Woman's Heart .....	136
Summer .....	137

# CONTENTS.

ix

	PAGE
Where Love Bides Not, Antoinette .....	137
The Voice I'll Never Hear Again .....	138
Sometime. Published July 13, 1909 .....	138
The Lake. Published October 16, 1902 .....	139
Love. Published January 20, 1905 .....	139
A Fisher Maiden. Published October 8, 1903 .....	140
A Premeditated Theft. Published July 21, 1910 .....	140
Christmas Time. Published December 23, 1903 .....	141
Faint Heart. Published December 20, 1905 .....	141
The Enigma of Life .....	142
Amid The Gloom. Published December 4, 1902 .....	142
Vain Regrets. Published November 3, 1905 .....	143
When Time is Dead. Published January 23, 1906 .....	143
Meditations of a Bookkeeper. Published February 27, 1907 .....	144
Her Song. Published February 12, 1901 .....	145
Amid The Crowd .....	145
Alice. Published April 25, 1908 .....	146
When Alice Sings. Published January 12, 1903 .....	147
Enforced Silence. Written in 1884 .....	148
Loquacity .....	149
Louise. Written in 1883 .....	150
When We Meet .....	151
Sweet Sue. Published October 31, 1904 .....	151
A Modern Juliet. Published June 24, 1907 .....	152
They Who Love. Published November 12, 1907 .....	152
Ode to a Bee. Published June 4, 1908 .....	153
Rumors. Published September 8, 1909 .....	154
Not Alone. Published December 8, 1908 .....	155
A Violet. Published January 19, 1909 .....	156
Unforgotten .....	157
Rhyme's Recompense. Published February 26, 1910 .....	158
Farewell. Published May 26, 1910 .....	159
Proximity .....	159
Beauty .....	160
Woman's Constancy .....	161
Filial Love .....	162
Show .....	162
Longings. Published May 28, 1909 .....	163
The Sea. Published December 3, 1909 .....	163
Shakespeare. Published March 18, 1910 .....	164

	PAGE
Unknown as Yet .....	164
Won .....	165
A Sonnet .....	165
Winter. Written in December, 1911 .....	166
Love's Day. Written in December, 1911 .....	166
In Jersey. Published October 13, 1909 .....	167
A Life's History .....	167
Why Need One Care? .....	168
My Poems .....	168
Frankness .....	169
By The Lake .....	169
Little Sue .....	171
Autumn. Published October 20, 1903 .....	172
Summer Days .....	172
That Morning .....	173
Susanna. Part of this published December 1, 1908 .....	174
A Fall .....	176
To Nellie .....	177
Friends .....	177
She Sang. Written in 1898 .....	178
No Longer Young .....	180
Love a Bar to Success .....	181
The Stimulus of Love .....	181
Past Dreams Recalled .....	181
The Belle of The Season. Written in 1898 .....	182
Joy .....	187

ACROSTICAL SECTION.—Pages 188 to 215 inclusive.

On Life's Highway .....	188
If in the Days to Come .....	188
My Ideal .....	189
A Dark-haired Divinity .....	189
April .....	190
May Day .....	190
Bereft .....	191
By the Balustrade .....	191
The Desolated Manse .....	192
L'Envoi .....	192
Day Dreams .....	193



# CONTENTS.

xi

	PAGE
The Ocean .....	193
Lasting Love .....	194
Christmas Day .....	194
This Life .....	195
To Those Who Wait .....	195
A Phantasy .....	196
The Girls .....	196
An Acrostical Adventurer .....	197
Dream Knowledge .....	197
A Modern Rosalind. Published in "The Orpheum News," December 23, 1907 .....	198
A Twilight Reverie .....	198
Love's Quandary .....	199
We Poor Men .....	200
A Spinster. Written in 1876 .....	200
My Heart's Secret .....	201
An Apparition .....	202
'Neath Lowering Skies .....	202
A Whispered Promise .....	203
An Undaunted Spirit .....	203
Lora .....	204
That Heart of Mine .....	204
A Dream .....	205
Nota Bene .....	205
A Plea for Cheerfulness. Written in May, 1897 .....	206
Ask Not Her Name .....	206
A Vision .....	207
A Lost Letter Restored. Written in 1899 .....	208
Maple Hall. Written July 15, 1875 .....	208
A Valentine Offering. Written in 1879 .....	209
Juno's Swans. Written in 1903 .....	209
In Youth's Bright Time. Written in 1880 .....	210
A Twilight Retrospect. Written January 1, 1876 .....	210
A Sunset on Corson's Inlet. Written September 8, 1910.....	211
Sand Castles .....	212
The Boy .....	212
The Girl .....	212
One Year Ago .....	213
The Days That Were .....	213
Sonnet .....	214

	PAGE
Hope's Star .....	214
Votes for Women .....	215
Marching On .....	215
A Dangerous Pilgrim .....	216
My Maryland .....	216
Finale .....	216
Esthetics .....	216
Impromptu Lines .....	217
In Restraint of Flight .....	217
The Past .....	218
The Future. Published September 17, 1902 .....	218
Life's Road. Published February 23, 1904 .....	218
Fancy. Published February 10, 1909 .....	219
Air Castles .....	219
Optimism. Published March 17, 1909 .....	220
A Lost World .....	220
Hope .....	221
Fate. Published August 20, 1909 .....	221
The Poets .....	222
Knowledge .....	222
Poet's Progress. Published March 29, 1909 .....	223
Pragmatic Psychology .....	223
Parnassus. Published June 15, 1909 .....	224
A Poet's Soul. Published July 20, 1910 .....	224
Finale .....	225
The Lady of Bethayres .....	225
Day Dreaming .....	226
No Quarrel .....	226
The Pursuit of Happiness .....	227
An Early Call .....	227
A Cheering Afterthought .....	227
Ambition .....	228
Hopes, Dreams and Prayers .....	229
Calumny. Published December 5, 1906 .....	229
Prelude .....	230
Hell .....	231
We Saints .....	235
My Choice .....	235
A Soul .....	236
Why Worry? .....	236

# CONTENTS.

xiii

	PAGE
The Vast Majority .....	237
Immortality .....	237
Hell Again .....	238
Man, or Conditional Immortality .....	238
Spirit Seekers .....	238
Spiritualism .....	239
Unheeded Advice .....	240
Dietetics, <i>A Lenten Thesis</i> .....	241
Political Parsons .....	242
Preachers, Police and Politics .....	243
My Heaven. Published April 9, 1909 .....	244
Thoughts. Published December 28, 1906 .....	245
My Spirit's Flight. Published February 13, 1903 .....	245
Death. Published January 12, 1904 .....	246
A Prospective Ride .....	247
Sure Things. Published February 7, 1910 .....	247
Faith. Published March 20, 1906 .....	248
Elegiac Lines .....	248
Despondency .....	249
Dead Friends .....	249
A Puzzled Will. Published March 6, 1907 .....	250
Life. Published May 18, 1909 .....	250
Rest. Published January 13, 1909 .....	251
This Life .....	251
Human Fortitude .....	252
Benevolence. Published February 20, 1906 .....	252
Dissimulation. Published December 26, 1908 .....	253
God's Children .....	253
Lines in Reply to Ella Wheeler Wilcox's "A Query". Pub- lished July 29, 1908 .....	254
The Dead .....	254
A Divinity. Published April 26, 1909 .....	255
Life's Battle .....	255
Jewelry .....	256
A Gem .....	257
Jewels .....	258
The Music of Other Days .....	260
With Nature. Published February 13, 1906 .....	260
Outside The Gates. Published February 27, 1905 .....	261
Lilies .....	261

	PAGE
Nearing The End .....	262
Love or Fear? .....	262
Living Again .....	262
Seems Queer .....	263
Life's Uncertainty .....	263
If I Were Told .....	264
Shall We E'er Know? .....	264
My Fiftieth Birthday .....	265
Encouragement .....	265
Why Wait? .....	265
Right Living .....	266
No More of Death .....	266
Individualism Versus Socialism .....	267
Modern Religious Cults. Published May 9, 1910 .....	267
The Wicked World .....	268
Duty's Call .....	269
Some Day I'll Know .....	269
Concerning Creation. Published November 3, 1910 .....	270
Forgiveness .....	270
Proselyting (with Postscript) .....	271
Sect Enthusiasts .....	273
Beatification Rites. Published in "Friend's Intelligencer," June 5, 1909 .....	275
No Joke. Published November 15, 1909 .....	275
The Higher Criticism .....	276
Toleration .....	276
Divorce .....	277
Man's Part (with Envoy) .....	277
Achieving Greatness .....	278
Life's Ways .....	278
Turning Over a New Leaf .....	279
Sowing and Reaping .....	279
Conversions .....	280
The Smoker's Church .....	281
Rhyme's Inefficacy .....	282
Posterity .....	283
The Redeemed .....	284
A Socialist .....	285
Humanity .....	286
Abolishing Life's Evils .....	286



# CONTENTS.

XV

	PAGE
Socialism and Anarchism .....	287
Liberty .....	292
Necessities .....	292
Buying Foreign Titles .....	293
Probabilities of Another Life .....	294
Religion and Science .....	294
Arbitration .....	295
Old Thoughts .....	296
Some Reflections. Published September 21, 1909 .....	297
Assassins .....	297
Wealth .....	298
Success .....	299
War. In a letter to "Public Ledger," published June 23, 1911.	300
An Armed Peace. In a letter to "Public Ledger," published June 27, 1911 .....	300
The Carmen's Strike. Published March 31, 1910 .....	301
My Name is Platt .....	303
John E. Reyburn .....	304
A Strike .....	305
A Veracious Narrative .....	306
Woman Suffrage. In a letter to "Public Ledger," published November 3, 1912 .....	307
An Unimportant Matter .....	307
Resourceful Woman .....	308
To Miss Margaret —— .....	309
Doing It .....	311
England and the United States .....	314
Yelpers .....	314
Dreamy Drones .....	315
Good Intentions .....	315
A Letter. Published November 6, 1909 .....	316
My Ship .....	318
Ghostly Visitors .....	318
Flightiness .....	319
Fame's Instability .....	319
The Baconian Theory .....	319
Friends All Friends .....	320
Annette. Written in 1900 .....	321
Recovered .....	322
I Won't Tell Her Name .....	323

	PAGE
An Afternoon's Stroll. Written in 1902 .....	326
Pinafore Revised .....	328
Art's Artifices .....	330
Partnership Prospects .....	331
Injustice .....	332
My Beau .....	333
A Cautious Man .....	336
What's The Use! .....	336
Stanzas Sent Strokes' Seed Store. Written December 31, 1909.	337
Rebuffed .....	340
A Nautical Twist .....	340
Jersey Fairs .....	341
Lines to E. W. W. ....	342
Lines to A. L. T. ....	342
Was It Wrong? .....	342
My Artistic Soul. Published in "The Orpheum News," December 30, 1907 .....	343
Love's Sacrifice .....	343
What Love Can Do .....	343
A Woman's Ideal Man .....	344
Solicitous Inquiries .....	344
That Sweetheart of Mine .....	345
Fair Flossie .....	345
Girls .....	346
A Considerate Man .....	346
Milton .....	346
Some Simple Stanzas Sent Sarah Slimcoe .....	347
Opera Passes .....	348
Vague Vaporings .....	349
At the Lunch Counter .....	349
A True Tale .....	350
Moralizing .....	351
Diverse Views .....	352
Strange .....	352
A Lost Thought .....	353
Supplied .....	353
The Non-Essentiality of Thought in the Construction of Poetry .....	353
Guilty or Not Guilty? .....	354
'Twas Never Meant .....	354

# CONTENTS.

xvii

	PAGE
A Warning .....	355
A Tribute to Women .....	355
Eternity .....	356
I Do Not Know .....	356
Foolishness .....	356
To A. L. T. of "The Bulletin" .....	357
The Mind .....	357
A Cold World .....	358
An Optimist .....	358
Some Paraphractical Lines .....	359
Anticipation .....	359
Tol-Rol-Lol-Loo .....	360
Politeness Pays .....	360
Preaching and Practicing .....	361
Practical Philosophy .....	362
Plainly Perceptible .....	362
Polar Polemics .....	363
Peary's Pre-eminence .....	364
Personified Perfection .....	364
Prefatorial Pleasantry. Written September 10, 1910 .....	365
Philadelphia's Poetical Police. Written in May, 1910 .....	370
Pugilistic Pictures .....	373
Precipitous Praise .....	374
Dope .....	374
Barbarians .....	375
About A Bout .....	376
The Colored Race. Published September 2, 1910 .....	377
On the Bleachers .....	379
A Physician of the Modern School .....	379
Syracuse Seminarians .....	380
Blondes and Brunettes .....	381
A Joy We All Might Know .....	381
Youth's Aspirations .....	382
A Tribute to Lord Alfred Tennyson .....	382
News .....	383
Our Dorothy .....	384
She's Back! .....	385
Youth .....	386
Life's Evening .....	386
A Grandson's Tribute to his Grandmother .....	387

	PAGE
The Academy .....	389
These Days .....	389
Solution of a Chess Problem. Written April 20, 1880 .....	390
A Poem in Prose. Published October 12, 1909 .....	391
Adam's Excoriation of Poets and their Productions .....	393
An Answer. This and the Adam letter were both published in July, 1905 .....	393
Not Obligatory .....	395
Astuteness .....	395
A Silent Harp .....	396
Just Deserts .....	396
Needs and Wants .....	397
Poesy's Essentials .....	397
The Pen .....	397
Insufficient Space .....	398
Miss * * * * * .....	398
Deferred Laurels .....	398
Hat Hanging Harpies .....	399
Hilarious Happenings .....	399
Hazardous Heights .....	399
Humorists .....	400
The Reality of the Unreal .....	400
Prologue .....	401
Gwendolen McKnett .....	402
A Model Man. Written in 1898 .....	468
No Mourning .....	485
Seedsmen and Poets .....	485
Uncommitted Sins. Written in 1911 .....	486
Time to Stop. Written in 1912 .....	487
An Autobiographical Sketch. Written in 1912 .....	488
Last Lines .....	489



## DEDICATORY VERSES.

I never was a poet, though  
There was, dear Maud, a time  
When I allowed my thoughts to flow  
In unrestricted rhyme.

Foolish? Well, yes: and really, Maud,  
I should know better now—  
Now when so many years have scored  
Their traces on my brow.

When I first imitated “ Keats ”,  
And imprudently soared  
In Poesy’s realms (of all rash feats  
The very rashest, Maud,)

I was, as you may well suppose,  
A juvenile: one who  
Deemed his ideas too great for prose,  
Hence only verse would do.

Yes, I was young and life seemed fair;  
I sang because, forsooth,  
One must whose heart is free from care,  
As all hearts are in youth.

And so I sang, and oft I sought  
The Muse’s aid, and she  
(Though rhyming scarcely seemed my forte)  
At times was kind to me.

Yes, Maud, I sang ; as well one might  
Who has no cause for tears.  
In youth's glad morning hearts are light :  
Grief comes in later years.

My verses very likely bored  
Those who perused them then :  
Surely I should know better, Maud,  
Than to offend again.

But yet this night my fancy strays  
Back to youth's time : I find  
The vagrant verses of past days  
Still linger in my mind.

Those days I wooed the Muse ! Ah ! Maud,  
If I just write a few  
Of the old rhymes in memory stored,  
And dedicate to you

The little book containing them,  
I'm sure that no one in  
The wide world will my act condemn :  
Though foolish, 'tis no sin.

While memory retains her seat  
Within my brain, while my  
Heart throbs I'll not forget those sweet  
Friendships of days gone by.

So, Maud, to you, where'er you are,  
I dedicate this night  
The book of rhymes that you in far  
Off days told me to write.

Beneath the stars that shone o'erhead  
We strolled, a fair young maid and I,  
Unheedful where our footsteps led,  
Unheeding time that glided by.

We talked the while, yet seemed to stray  
O'er topics of a careless kind ;  
Although a deeper subject lay,  
As yet untold, within my mind.

Howe'er the twinkling stars above  
Seemed urging me, as on we strolled,  
To ope my mind ; I did—and love,  
That old, old tale again was told.

Oh, happy walk ! Oh, happy night !  
When love thus plighted troth fore'er :  
Though long since then Time's sped his flight,  
Yet still to me that maid is fair.

---

#### ONE DAY.

Thoughts of commingled joy and pain  
Were better lost :  
Bright scenes long past, though sweet to gain,  
Do, when they cost

An aching void, a heart's remorse,  
A mind's unrest,  
Embitter life which memory's loss  
Might else make blest.

And yet could I bid thought expire,  
I am not sure  
That I would exercise that power :  
No, I'd endure

Its racking pains, so that I may  
     Again live o'er  
 One day (O! such a happy day)  
     I knew of yore.

---

## REMEMBRANCE.

Years blunt the probe of sorrow's dart,  
     Whilst charms more dear  
 They oft to pleasures past impart;  
     Therefore why fear  
 To enter Memory's mine, and there  
     The past review,  
 Dwelling o'er scenes, some dark, some fair,  
     That once we knew?

Although with joys that memory  
     Wakes in the mind—  
 Joys whose endeared remembrance we  
     A solace find—  
 There blendeth many a scene of pain,  
     Yet, Oh! when all  
 Life's fairest portion we regain,  
     The cost, how small!

Who would not bear the cost to move  
     'Mong joys of old,  
 To see those whom they once did love,  
     And have unfold  
 Before their gaze the past, restored  
     In sweet entire?  
 Oh! is there aught that could afford  
     A pleasure higher?



At early morning time upon the street  
This maiden passes by : I know her not,  
Yet in her keeping she my heart has got—  
This maid so gentle-mannered and so sweet.

In summer's heat, in winter's fiercest snows,  
In days that are most beautiful and clear,  
Through all the changeful seasons of the year,  
Along the same oft traversed way she goes.

We all do have our duties ; hers may be  
Within some still, close room to work throughout  
The hours of each day. O true and stout  
Must be, fair girl, that heart which beats in thee.

Beyond the city now the hills are green  
With nature's richest touch ; but I prefer  
The stifling town, for here I may see her—  
A joy not found in any country scene.

And thou, O gentle fellow-worker, thou  
Art cheerful through these long mid-summer days.  
Youth's hopes are thine ; and all may know who gaze  
Upon thy face that thou art happy now.

And so I note each morning on the street  
This cheerful maiden pass. I know her not,  
Yet in her keeping she my heart has got—  
This maid so gentle-mannered and so sweet.

'Midst tangled weeds that o'er life's way have grown,  
 There glimmer scenes of gladness we have known;  
 The paths whereon our footsteps trod they mark,  
 Guiding us like beacons in the dark.  
 Oh! happy spots, how brightly do they gleam!  
 Their memories seeming like a pleasant dream,  
 As they, unto our mind's perspective eye,  
 Reveal undimm'd the joys of days gone by.

The lapse of time, with all its griefs, can ne'er  
 The memory of those happy scenes impair.  
 Ah! no; it seems that each succeeding year  
 Their clear remembrance renders still more clear.  
 Like fresh oasis on a barren waste,  
 'T is sweet to near them, and 't is sweet to taste  
 Their joys again, and once again stray o'er  
 The pleasant paths we trod in years before.

---

#### THE LAMENT OF A VILLAGE POET.

"Uneasy lies the head"—I quote Shakespeare—  
 "That wears a crown"; and I may add also  
 Uneasy lie the heads of all men here  
 Who have won fame, a fact I'll try to show.

To illustrate, I'll simply take myself:  
 For (though no laurel wreath my head doth crown)  
 I have achieved a name, although not pelf,  
 Within the precincts of our rural town.

I have been styled a Poet, and where'er  
 I chance to go I'm known by that name:  
 When I am out the people point and stare  
 At me, some even jeer—and this is Fame!

Well, it may be a fame most high, and yet  
I gladly would consent to be less great:  
The day I first wrote poetry I regret:  
The costs of greatness I have learned to hate.

The costs of greatness are severe, and O!  
In my case they are even more, for I'm  
Expected by most all the girls I know  
To spend my days in doing nought but rhyme.

How oft when at my tasks I hear the sound  
Of voices in the sunny fields anear—  
Free, happy voices, whilst alas! I'm bound  
A prisoner within my sanctum drear.

The girls they care not for the brain that reels  
From application by the midnight oil,  
They care not how the Poet lives or feels,  
They think not of his unrequited toil;

His fevered forehead and his sunken eyes,  
His threadbare garments and his scanty purse,  
His isolation, and his long-drawn sighs  
Are heeded not: they care but for his *verse*.\*

There is no scrap-book in the town but that  
Has some effusion from my taxèd brain,  
Of which there's quite a number written at  
The cost of many a sleepless night of pain.

And if, at her request, I write Mame White  
More than I do Sal Brown, I but incur  
Miss Brown's displeasure, who will cut or slight  
Me when again I meet or speak to her.

\* "They," as the writer has since found, do not care even for his verse. This poem, it should be noted, was composed at a very early period of the *author's* "career".

Then when I really wish to send a line  
 To some new friend, 't is like to happen she  
 Will misconstrue my innocent design,  
 And slight me too for my temerity.

In this way I have ofttimes met disdain  
 From one that else might have become a friend;  
 Yes, I have lost more than I e'er can gain  
 By the effusions that in fear I've penned.

Yet, launched forth on my course, I cannot pause  
 Nor turn me from my thorny path of gloom:  
 I must obey harsh Fate's exacting laws  
 Until I reach the goal—the cold, cold Tomb.

Written in 1876.

---

#### FREE AGENCY.

Are we at liberty—we sons  
 Of earth—to act or else keep still  
 As suits us, or automatons  
 Obeying a diviner will?

I hold that, in a moral sense,  
 We all may act just as we please;  
 Though we must take the consequence  
 If we outrage law's stern decrees.

If wrong, I'm willing to amend  
 These views of mine: theology,  
 On which this question seems to trend,  
 Is something too abstruse for me.

I sometimes think we are not free.  
 Oft when my brain is fagged and just  
 Needs rest, a something urges me  
 To rhyme—to rhyme. And rhyme I must!

Written in 1911.



I've never loved, ah me!  
But whyfore sigh?  
A lover is not free  
From pain, and I—

Thus being heartwhole—can  
Much better stand  
Those trials that meet man  
On every hand.

Untrammeled by the links  
Of a love's chain,  
Life prizes are, methinks,  
Less hard to gain.

And yet at times I'm moved  
To sigh: well, this  
Loving and being loved  
Perhaps is bliss.

Poets do tell us so;  
It must be true.  
Really, I'd like to know  
What 't is to woo:

What 't is to woo, to win,  
To wed—to move  
Henceforth 'mong scenes wherein  
Abideth love.

To love, to love! Well, it—  
As I may say—  
May be most exquisite,  
And I some day

Might know more than I do  
At present of  
The sweets belonging to  
This thing called love.

Ah yes! sometime, somewhere,  
On some glad day,  
By some one who is fair,  
I somehow may

Be taught that passion grand—  
Be taught to know  
A lover's rapture, and  
A lover's woe.

And yet, and yet instead  
Of blessings which  
A perfect love doth shed  
On poor and rich,

It may through life be mine  
Alone to go.

Well, well, need I repine  
If this be so?

But it were better not  
To speculate  
On what might be; our lot  
Is ruled by fate.

Ah yes, one's destiny  
Is fixed I fear:

"There's a divinity,"  
So says Shakespeare,

"That shapes our ends, rough-hew  
Them how we will."

Our destiny, 'tis true,  
We must fulfill.

Working away  
The live-long day,  
Breathing the stifling air,  
Only to leave  
The task when eve  
Closes the day of care:

And then, used up,  
Go home and sup,  
Then sleep—sweet balm—until  
A new day breaks  
On earth, and wakes  
The toiler of the mill.

Each day this scene,  
This dull routine,  
Relieved by no bright spot:  
No hope's glad ray  
Lighting a way  
Unto a happier lot.

---

#### DOLLY'S ALBUM.

I sit my desk before,  
And with much pleasure o'er  
These leaves I look:  
For many wishes kind,  
Expressed by friends, I find  
Within this book.

And now, Miss Dolly, I  
To write in verse shall try  
My best: although  
To worthiness like thine  
These humble lines of mine  
Cannot, I know,

Full justice do. Yet, Dolly,  
It were indeed a folly  
    Even to dream  
That I, or any man,  
In prose or poetry can  
    Take as a theme

Thy charming self, and to  
His subject matter do  
    Full justice: still—  
Though by no means a bard—  
I will my brains rack hard  
    Some leaves to fill

With rhyme; for thou dost ask  
Me to attempt this task,  
    And how could I  
Thee anything refuse?  
So I'll invoke the Muse.  
    Come, Muse, deny

Me nothing, as I—more  
Than any time before—  
    Do need thy aid:  
For now my thoughts are of  
A maid whom many love—  
    A fair young maid.

And thou, Miss Dolly, art  
That maid, and in my heart  
    The wish most dear  
Is that futurity  
May have bright scenes for thee:  
    Yes, may life here,

As now, be blest always  
With glad and sunny days.  
But to an end  
I now shall draw these rhymes,  
Hoping thou wilt sometimes  
On me, thy friend,

Bestow a thought. And now  
Farewell. Ah! Dolly, how  
Reluctantly  
The parting word I pen:  
Yet all must feel sad when  
They part from thee.

Still hope doth make less sad  
The parting. While I had  
Far rather dwell  
More o'er these rhymes, I know  
It cannot be, and so—  
A last farewell.

---

DOLLY'S HOLLY.

I thank thee much, kind Dolly,  
For that bright crimson holly  
Thou gavest me:  
It will, I fully know,  
Wherever I may go,  
Bring thoughts of thee.

'Tis emblematic of  
Peace and good-will and love  
Prevailing here  
Now among men: yes, it  
Is precious—that bright bit  
Of Christmas cheer.



*As expressed in a letter to Miss E.A.P. in August of 1883.*

Throughout the day I toil hard at the store:  
My "toil" consists in standing at the door  
And helping to support, as one might say,  
Those pillars each side of the store's door-way:  
I, in supporting them, support myself;  
A pleasant way methinks of gaining pelf.  
At eve I gaze the bath-room window out  
To see if Mrs. Kreutzer is about:  
Yon lamp-post's glare on Newbold avenue  
Ofttimes her willowy form brings into view.  
Yet seldom, ah! too seldom do I hear  
Those dulcet tones the boys so greatly fear;  
That woman, "nursed in affluence" when young,  
Seems to have bridled her discursive tongue.  
And so, regretfully, I close the sash,  
And soon uptownwards stroll I for a mash;  
But baffled in this quest, as oft I am,  
I, Kreutzer-like, breathe forth a quiet "damn".  
Yet I am not unhappy, for next door  
Are Galwick's girls, who warble o'er and o'er  
Those soulful songs of sentimental kind,  
And this is pleasing to my tortured mind.  
They sing of violets that are so sweet,  
And "Baby's Empty Cradle" they repeat.  
For hours I have list, with joy and pride,  
To their eternal "Gliding down the tide".  
They sing to have their "Graves kept green", and I  
With this request would wish much to comply.  
I need a change—a change of air: [I here  
Mean air of music, not the atmosphere.]  
E'en give me William with his "Peek-a-boo",  
Or his "O'Reilley"—even that would do.

Ah yes! more change in tunes would crown my bliss,  
Nor would more change in money come amiss.  
But Philadelphia has its own delights,  
The sun shines here in days, the moon at nights.  
Although we have no lake nor mountains, still  
Some hills have we: (for instance—"Cherry Hill".)  
You have a "bar" at which you justice do;  
We also have our bars, aye! not a few.  
And so we manage here to jog along;  
Although we make of life no "grand, sweet song",  
Yet does it matter? Surely hearts may break  
E'en 'mid those peaceful hills by Crystal Lake.  
A wretch by care oppressed, go where he may,  
Cannot from Sorrow's grasp e'er break away.  
The end's the same, a little mound of earth  
Will cover those whose hearts now swell with mirth  
As well as those whose portion here below  
Is that of grief and agonizing woe.  
My view of death is this—but hold: excuse  
This most lugubrious turning of my muse.  
I meant to rattle off a careless strain,  
Nor thought to touch on things that might give pain.  
Let Joy prevail: let Pleasure hold control,  
And shed an ecstasy within each soul.  
Let happy scenes greet our eyes as we  
Peer into that unknown futurity.  
And now, in closing, I would fain express  
My wishes for your future happiness.  
So fare-you-well. Write soon and tell me how  
Things are progressing at "Friend Phinny's" now.

Last evening at the club I said  
 A good thing which I'll now repeat.  
 I—er—no, this book *might be read*,  
 So I shall have to be “discreet”.

A bard and clubman should suppress  
 Sometimes his fervent tendencies :  
 Hence I'll now try, I can't do less,  
 To observe the proprieties.

---

#### A MILD HOMILY ON DRINK.

*(In which the writer temperately considers the question  
 so as not to displease any likely reader of his book.)*

Some men when seized with thirst go in  
 Saloons, whose doors are open wide ;  
 They drink beer, whiskey, rum and gin  
 Until their thirst is satisfied.

They have a right, a legal right  
 (No moral right, I sometimes think,)  
 To patronize morn, noon and night  
 The bar, and fill themselves with drink.

These bar-room patrons may not thank  
 Me if I say aught against them ;  
 They may call me a “temperance crank”  
 If I their drinking ways condemn.

Therefore, though I can not commend  
 The habit of strong drink, yet those  
 Addicted to it why offend?  
 'T will do no good ; so I shall close.

OR A

## SOULFUL SOLILOQUY SUDDENLY SQUELCHED.

" 'T is midnight: a glorious star  
Scintillates in the heavens afar.  
Like a star I—hic!—feel  
As homeward I reel,  
For I've sinned till late—hic!—at a bar.

" With infinite yearning I peer  
Into space. Leaning silently here  
Against the lamp-post  
At this corner, I'm most  
Overcome by emotion—and beer.

" How beautiful now appears Mars!  
Athwart night's dark sky his—hic!—bars  
Of "—Here with a billy  
A cop knocked him silly,  
Which caused him to see some more stars.

Not of stars histrionic which we  
On Chestnut street frequently see—  
No, I sing not of them;  
'Tis those orbs that begem  
The blue sky that just now enthrill me.

But yet in the zenith ablaze  
There's a star on which I oft gaze  
That reminds me, it seems,  
Of a bright star which beams  
At "The Chestnut" in various plays.

These two stars, I am well aware,  
 Are strangely alike: both are fair,  
     Both are brilliant; but O!  
     They're so distant, and so  
 I'm o'erwhelmed with grief and despair.

---

## ART.

*Inspired by those gifted Goddesses of Burlesque—Miss  
 Flossie Friskoe and Miss Dollie de Laine.*

I worship Art, and to her Fane  
     I very often go:  
 There to enthuse o'er a de Laine,  
     Likewise o'er a Friskoe.

I list to music's sweetest strains;  
     My heart a rapture knows.  
 I'm thankful for the world's de Laines,  
     And for the world's Friskoes.

A knowledge of chaste art one gains  
     When towards the zenith those  
 Toes point—the toes of our de Laines  
     And those of our Friskoes.

Those sturdy, supple, speedy toes!  
     Night's gem-decked sky contains  
 No stars as bright as our Friskoes,  
     As fair as our de Laines.

Fill these girls' slippers with champagne  
     Until they overflow:  
 I drink your health, dear Doll de Laine—  
     Yours too, fair Floss Friskoe.



To art's exponents much we owe.  
 I scarcely can refrain  
 From idolizing Floss Friskoe,  
 Adoring Doll de Laine.

Art, though, concerns me—not, ah no!  
 The artists. It were vain  
 To think of fairest Floss Friskoe,  
 Or of dear Doll de Laine.

That scintillating starry twain  
 Care not for me, I know.  
 Farewell, farewell, dear Doll de Laine.  
 Farewell, fair Floss Friskoe.

To Art—to Art alone I pay  
 My homage. I infer  
 None can object in any way  
 To my adoring—*her*.



### FLORABELLE FONTAINE.

Gleeful gallery gods get gayer; graver guys—good graybeards—  
 growing

Fairly faint from following Flora's favorite fantastic flights.  
 She—sweet seraph—sprightly stepping, swiftly swirling, some-  
 times showing

Dainty diaphanous drapery dudes deem divine delights.

Beautiful, bewitching being, briskly bounding, brightly beaming;  
 Such seductive, suave, soul-stirring smiles spectators seldom see.  
 Dear, delightful, daring danseuse, never in my deepest dreaming  
 During dark, despairing days did dandier darlings dance for me.

As I light from my auto the guys  
Round the door of "The Stratford" look wise;  
    They seem somehow to know  
    That 'tis Flossie Friskoe  
With whom I would fain fraternize.

I enter the general café;  
Having dined in my leisurely way,  
    I next light a cigar,  
    Drink *her* health at the bar,  
Then my chauffeur whirls me to the play.

To "The Gaieties" I of course go;  
My seat's on the aisle, the first row.  
    I step out 'tween the acts  
    (I am stating plain facts)  
To drink healths to fair Flossie Friskoe.

I am bald—I confess it; therefore  
When the famed seven-veil ballet corps  
    Do their turn on the stage,  
    I, in spite of my age,  
Shriek with joy till my throat becomes sore.

My passion for art is intense.  
True art moves me deeply, and hence  
    In the maddening whirl  
    Of a short-skirted girl  
The pleasure I feel is immense.

At the close of the dance, I should state,  
I find I must needs lubricate  
    That strained larynx of mine;  
    This I do with some wine  
Chased by whiskey, the which I take straight.

Plays deeply affect me, and so  
 On reaching home after the show  
     I'm obliged to be led  
     By my valet to bed,  
 Where I dream of sweet Flossie Friskoe.

I rise about ten the next day,  
 Take a bath, read critiques on the play;  
     Having braced myself by  
     Several "Manhattans", I  
 Then lunch, then—Ah! the matinee.

A bachelor's life such as mine  
 Is not a bad thing, I opine;  
     Wine, woman and song  
     To beguile it. What! wrong  
 To be swayed by this thrice-blest combine?

*L'envoi.*

Life's a mystery. Let Fortune frown  
 Upon me, I'll not be cast down.  
     I never shall grow  
     Pessimistic, I know,  
 While Flossie remains in the town.

---

CONSIDERATE.

Men's views differ greatly, and hence  
 When I on a subject commence  
     Which seems delicate, I  
     Draw it mild. I would die  
 Rather than give a reader offense.

## 40 QUEEN OF THE CORPS DE BALLET.

'Tis good to see this gloriously graceful girl gyrating  
In terpsichorean twirlings to the timbrel's tuneful strain;  
Fond, foolish, fleeting fancies fill my mind when fascinating  
Flossie Friskoe's fairy feet flit, as it were, across my brain.

O Flossie! Flossie Friskoe! dearest girl, there's no denying  
That you're a first-class thoroughbred: no fact can be more  
plain.

Beyond a doubt, angelic one, you could, without half trying,  
My devoutest adoration very speedily obtain.

Queen of the ballet, Queen also of that fond heart within me,  
It storms, and I am wet clean through: the show, I know, is o'er.  
Why not come forth? O! can it be that you don't care to win me?  
If I, love, really thought so I'd drop dead at this stage door.

Dead! Ah, my life's star, heaven knows I would for you die  
gladly:

I love you more than I dare tell, though lacking none in nerve.  
Your imaged form, shrined in my heart, I worship O! so madly:  
I would that I could praise you in the manner you deserve.

Your myriad charms I can't resist. Gad! I am badly smitten:  
At last I've learned what love is, something I ne'er knew before.  
Will that love be returned some day? Or shall I get the mitten?  
I tremble when I think what Fate may have for me in store.

---

### UNCOMMUNICATIVE.

I first met her, I won't say who,  
On Ches—but I shall not say where.  
I told her—no, it would not do  
To state just here what I said there.

We dined at the Ritz-Carl—no, I  
Shall mention not the place; but when  
We parted we said we—but why  
Tell when and where we'll meet again?

I cannot very well refrain  
 From saying that 't is quite  
 A joy for me to know McGrane  
 Is now an Orpheum light.

McGrane will prove a drawing card ;  
 He is an actor true ;  
 I saw him oft at " The Girard ",  
 Also at the " Bijou ".

He's strong, artistic—just the sort  
 Of Thespian one likes.  
 I once saw E. L. Davenport  
 Portray the brutal Sikes :

I witnessed our favorite  
 More recently sustain  
 The same rôle : both stars made a hit,  
 But I preferred McGrane.

He by his art thrills our heartchords ;  
 Ah ! no one, I maintain,  
 Can tread with truer grace the boards  
 Than Thomas J. McGrane.

I prophesy a future bright :  
 Wealth, fame, too, for this most  
 Accomplished histrionic light  
 Whom I propose to toast.

Come, fill them up full to the brim ;  
 Drink deep, aye, till you drain  
 Your glasses dry in toasting him—  
 The genial McGrane.

Long life, sound health, friends ever true,  
 A long and prosperous reign  
 Upon the stage—these we wish you,  
 Friend Thomas J. McGrane.



*Respectfully asked one of the members of the Orpheum Company.*

Tell me, Lottie, have you ever  
    Been in love? Come, why so mute?  
Let me know. I'm told you're clever,  
    And they do say you're—a beaut.

I don't doubt it—ah! I know it.  
    Cleverness and beauty are  
Gifts that well might thrill a poet  
    Who discerns them in a star.

I'm no bard: I show this clearly;  
    But the question is not of  
One's poetic skill: 't is merely  
    If Lot ever was in love.

I'm not moved by—O! believe me,—  
    Idle curiosity  
In this matter: it would grieve me  
    If Lot thought so ill of me.

Does she love? That is the query,  
    Not if she is loved: Ah, no!  
Lovers! Why, their vows must weary  
    Very often Lot Briscoe.

I myself, a man of forty,  
    A staid bachelor, have at times  
Felt inclined—O! was it naughty?—  
    To indite the girl some rhymes.

I have watched with admiration  
    Her love scenes: they make one feel  
There's back of the simulation  
    Something that is strong and real.

Something grand and sweet and mighty;  
 'Tis the love that some hearts know.  
 Love, aye! such as now glows brightly  
 In the heart of Lot Briscoe.  
 From her eyes love's light is beaming.  
 Could that kindly glow illumine  
 My sad life: nay, I am dreaming—  
 Vainly dreaming 'mid the gloom.

---

### OUR ERSTWHILE FRIENDS.

**A** toast now to our erstwhile friends, to those fair stars, so gifted,  
 Whose pictures we no longer see framed at the theatre door:  
**Though** the Josephines, the Evelyns and the Lillians have drifted  
 From town, they still in our hearts dwell—they'll dwell there  
 evermore.

---

### AN APPOINTMENT.

She promised to meet him at eight.  
 Still when Nate made the date a long wait  
 Was before him he feared.  
 At ten Kate appeared,  
 Exclaiming "dear me! am I late?"  
 "Yes, Kate, somewhat late," replied Nate.  
 "And yet fate I would hate to berate.  
 I instinctively knew  
 That at a rendezvous  
 You'd be late—this is straight, let me state."  
 "The play now is over, no doubt;  
 But meet me to-morrow about  
 Three o'clock in the day,  
 To attend the night's play:  
 We might then get there ere the show's out."

I'm fond of moving-picture shows ;  
I watch with pleasure every scene  
The wizard's apparatus throws  
Upon the taut-drawn muslin screen.

Mountains and vales, fields, swaying trees,  
Great cities in which men are pent,  
The free, vast ocean—on all these  
I gaze with a rapt wonderment.

When one can not in person go  
Where nature's fair scenes are, it's nice  
To sit then in a picture show  
And view them at so small a price.

I'm fond also of vaudeville ;  
Some things therein I can't resist ;  
I'm always glad to know I will  
See a first-class ventriloquist.

But songs well rendered seem to please  
Me more than any other thing ;  
I love to hear old melodies  
Sung by those who know how to sing.

An educated pig or horse,  
A cultured ape, a well-trained flea,  
Or dog or seal—each is a source  
Of interest and joy to me.

A monologist's rattling wit,  
Musicians who perform on all  
Known instruments, a black-face skit,  
Contortionists—such things ne'er pall.

I like a graceful dancing act ;  
The acrobats give me a thrill ;  
A playlet I enjoy. In fact,  
I'm very fond of vaudeville.

I feel most kindly to those who  
 Display such grace and cleverness  
 In their especial acts, and to  
 The artists all I wish success.  
 They are painstaking, one and all;  
 Some are not perfect, yet why look  
 For faults? I've ne'er felt moved to call  
 (I'm glad to say this) "Get the hook".

---

 AN AVERMENT.

*A poem inspired by and dedicated to Miss Friskoe.*

Business affairs  
 And other cares  
 Knocked out, methought, the spell that she  
 Had o'er me cast  
 In seasons past.  
 But that spell "will not down", I see.  
 On pleasure bent,  
 Last night I went  
 To see the play; in it I saw  
 Lottie Friskoe,  
 And lo! (yes, "lo")  
 The old spell held me as of yore.  
 It sways me still,  
 And ever will  
 While stars—but is this hyperbole?  
 Nay, nay: it is  
 The truth, I wis.  
 I cannot lie, upon my soul.  
 When I aver,  
 Therefore, that her  
 Smiles fan [this line sounds well] anew  
 Hope's flickering glow,  
 Lottie Friskoe  
 Knows the averment is quite true.

To write like this  
 To Lottie Fris-  
 Koe is an easy thing to do.  
 A bard has got  
 A snap when Lot-  
 Tie is the one whom he writes to.

There are some themes  
 Which, so it seems,  
 Poets are rather loath to drop ;  
 When I write of  
 Some one I love  
 I find it difficult to stop.

An ed-i-tor  
 Must not, therefore,  
 Try to dam (up) a poet's soul.  
 I'm not profane,  
 I but maintain  
 That poets are beyond control.

---

#### THE REJUVENESCENCE OF AN ILLINOIS PEACH.

Miss Dubois, whose girth was too great,  
 Decided to emaciate  
 Herself, so to speak ;  
 Hence for more than a week  
 She fasted to reduce her weight.

She wanted to leave Illinois  
 And star in burlesque. Miss Dubois  
 Knew, though, that men are  
 Not much stuck on a star  
 Of superfluous avoirdupois.



She was forty, yet fair for all that;  
 In her twenties she had appeared at  
     A Bowery hall.

She said, at this call  
 Of the wild, "I'll get rid of my fat".

When my embonpoint is less in  
 Evidence, then—ah! then I'll begin  
     Practicing the old glides,  
     Curves, and serpentine slides.  
 Wait! I'll soon be sufficiently thin.

Yes, said she, when my adipose parts  
 Are toned down by my drastic arts,  
     I'll again whirl in tights  
     Behind the footlights,  
 And again dance my way in men's hearts.

So for nine days she lived upon nought  
 But air; she obtained what she sought—  
     That is, a slim waist,  
     Which was much to her taste.

She stars now at a seaside resort.  
 In short tinseled skirts, which display  
 So well her rare form, this fair fay  
     These days dances and sings,  
     And does other things

On the boards, in a most fetching way.  
 I ne'er, I may add, miss a chance  
 Of seeing this now slim sylph dance.  
     Oft on her agile limb  
     And ankle so trim

I bestow a—er—well, casual glance.  
 In an office one gets no fresh air;  
 To the sea, therefore, I'll soon repair.

The Illinois Peach  
     In a joint near the beach  
 Does her stunts. I'll spend all my time there.

The seashore! O what pleasures are  
 Found there! My greatest joy, I think,  
 Is to lean up against this bar,  
 And smoke and chew and talk and drink.

It's usually too hot for me  
 On the boardwalk; I find this beer  
 Saloon more cool; when by the sea  
 I spend most all of my time here.

Fans run by electricity  
 Put ocean breezes on the blink:  
 Hence in this place, when by the sea,  
 I lounge, and smoke, and chew, and drink.

Its name? No, in books 't is unwise  
 To insert "ads": true poets shrink  
 From this; so I'll not advertise  
 The place where I smoke, chew and drink.

O! smoking, chewing, drinking—three  
 Of life's most rare joys; what a boon  
 To man is this blest trinity,  
 Whose praise I sing in this—hic—sloon.

---

### OPPORTUNITY.

We're told that Opportunity  
 Knocks at all doors: I rather think  
 That I the day she called on me  
 Must have stepped out to take a drink.

When she sought, though, an interview  
 With me I may not at the time  
 Have heard her knocking, be'ng too  
 Busy—too busy writing rhyme.

And she will not repeat her call!  
 My chance I lost. Was it the Muse—  
 My love for her—that caused my fall?  
 Or was it my love for the booze?

I loved too well: 'twas indiscreet,  
 As I now know. Alas! I might  
 Have the whole world now at my feet  
 If I had only acted right.

Ah! dearest Saint,  
A heart, though faint,  
May this glad day, without restraint,  
    Its fondest secret tell.  
Hence I opine  
The right is mine  
To forward now a valentine  
    To one whom I love well.

I love her. Yes,  
I must confess  
I love her. I can not say less,  
    Nor yet can I say more.  
Indeed, indeed,  
There is no need;  
I've said more here—for her to read—  
    Than I e'er said before.

---

## A NAME.

I hear your name,  
And into flame  
Glow the old love—the love that came  
To me one day  
In flowery May,  
When I met you upon life's way.

Though time, dear Maud,  
With lines has scored  
My brow, your name vibrates a chord  
In my heart, for  
Within its core  
You live as in the days of yore.

On this, thy day, most hearts, St. Valentine,  
 Incline to love ; my own sad heart also  
 Shares in the season's joy. Ah me ! I know  
 So fair—so dear a maid ; and it is mine,  
 As one who worshipeth at Beauty's shrine,  
 Life's fondest wish in simple verse to show.  
 Not they, O gracious Saint, who truly owe  
 Allegiance to that sacred cause of thine  
 Methinks can scorn a tale that love hath told :  
 And therefore she, whom I do hold so dear,  
 May to my story lend a kindly ear  
 Nor feel the while that I have been too bold.  
 This day, this happy day, one may unfold  
 The secrets of the heart without a fear.

1906.

## MEMORIES.

*Called up by a re-perusal, after the lapse of years, of the sonnet-valentine  
 in whose depths (not very profound depths) the writer has hidden a cer-  
 tain name of an, at that time, uncertain friend.*

He knew not (Ah ! how could he know !)  
 When he wrote that verse long, long ago,  
 That between its lines he  
 Would in later days see  
 The name of a friend—not a foe.  
 Friends are precious, and those whom we meet  
 In the world make our lives seem more sweet.  
 Yes, 'tis friends that one needs,  
 As I learned when "in seeds".  
 Ah ! I had one—once—on Market street !  
 The writer, though, does not intend  
 To muse now o'er rhymes he once penned,  
 But he's glad to behold  
 In this valentine old  
 The name—not of a foe, but a friend.

May, 1912.

This day confers prerogatives,  
And hence I might  
Now to the dearest girl that lives  
Some lines indite.

I love her: 't would be strange indeed  
If I did not.  
She is the very girl I need  
To bless my lot.

Without her I could not endure  
This life on earth;  
For it would then be, I am sure,  
Of little worth.

On hearing these plain truths will she  
My suit decline?  
I need her so. I trust she'll be  
My valentine.

---

## THEMIC VARIETY.

One should not on a single string  
Continuously play,  
And therefore e'en from such a thing  
As love I sometimes stray.

By doing so I'm apt to light  
On a theme I know more  
About; in which case readers might  
Not find me such a bore.

But I'm most partial, I confess,  
To love; yet of all themes  
It is the one with which I'm less  
Acquainted, so it seems.



My soul adores, St. Valentine,  
 A certain maid: O! may  
 I not dispatch a rhythmic line  
 To her, good Saint, this day?

No other maiden is so fair,  
 So sweet, so dear as she.  
 Will such a creature ever care  
 In any way for me?

Perhaps she may: oft has a maid  
 Been won by Poesy's art.  
 Come then, O Muse, lend me thy aid  
 To win this fair one's heart.

O! with Promethean fire fill  
 My o'erwrought mind: endow  
 Me with the power to enthrill  
 That soul so tranquil now.

---

BOLDNESS.

A tyro's ignorance may be  
 Rightly regarded as sublime;  
 'Tis this kind of sublimity  
 That I possess when I write rhyme.

It is my unacquaintanceship,  
 And not familiarity,  
 With love which causes me to dip  
 So often in that mystery.

An ignorance that is profound  
 Emboldens one; great poets tread  
 With reverent awe Love's holy ground:  
 I stroll thereon without a dread.

Come, fairest Adaline,  
And be forever mine.  
Grant me my soul's request, and with a kiss  
Seal the sweet compact of  
A never-dying love  
That is to crown our lives with heaven's bliss.

That heart of mine ne'er knew  
Love's strange, sweet thrill till you  
Aroused it by your charms, dear Adaline:  
It now lies at your feet,  
And O! 't will cease to beat  
If you disdain it as a valentine.

---

#### A BOLD DECLARATION.

I don't exaggerate  
The least bit when I state  
Boldly upon this page that I love Grace;  
In fact, for her I feel  
An adoration real—  
An adoration time can ne'er efface.

Love wins love, so they say;  
If this be true, some day  
My love for Grace will be returned, and then—  
Yes, then I'll find life worth  
The living, for on earth  
I'll surely be the happiest of men.

## THIS DAY.

Evening is drawing near.  
Before the day is done  
I wish to tell some one  
Why it has seemed so dear.

Yes, I fain would disclose,  
Ere in the glowing west  
The sun sinks to his rest,  
The love that my heart knows.

To her I now convey  
That love. Shall it be mine  
To gain, St. Valentine,  
Her's in return—this day?

---

## FATE'S BOOK.

In Fate's book it is recorded  
*Love shall triumph.* Ah! if so,  
Then my love for her, I know,  
Will not long go unrewarded.

---

## HER SMILE.

I hold, (though I may not be right—  
There have been times when I was wrong),  
That, as a rule, the smiles which light  
Up a fair face deserve a song.

And that is why I write these lines.  
Her kindly, rare, sweet, lingering,  
Dear smile from out the past now shines  
On me, and I've just got to sing!

*(After—a long way after—T. Buchanan Read.)*

The shutters of  
That house above  
Our alley, where resides my love,  
Are closed: the sight  
Unnerves me quite;  
It casts upon my life a blight.

I am bereft;  
My heart is cleft.  
Marie, alas! the town has left.  
Her folks and she  
Will by the sea  
The summer spend. O woe is me!

I saw them go;  
It grieved me, though  
I durst not my emotion show.  
My grief I tried  
By smiles to hide.  
I could much easier have sighed.

But now as I  
Pass slowly by  
Her darkened home I loudly sigh.  
When no one's near  
I need not fear  
To heave a sigh or drop a tear.

O! happy sea  
To have Marie  
Sojourn these days so near to thee;  
To have her stroll  
Where thy waves roll  
Must thrill thy ever throbbing soul.

I sadly pore  
 My ledger o'er  
 While Marie lingers at the shore.  
 At night I go  
 Down town to blow  
 The froth off beers to drown my woe.

Yes, my Marie  
 Is by the sea,  
 Drifting perchance far, far from me.  
 My heart doth bleed.  
 O! I have need  
 To—to apologize to Read.

---

## HANDICAPPED.

'Gad! if rhymes could only win her,  
 Then this girl, this saint divine,  
 Would, as sure as I'm a sinner,  
 Very soon be wholly mine.

But rhymes cut no ice when laying  
 Siege to hearts: rocks and not rhyme  
 (I know well what I am saying)  
 Win a woman every time.

Still a title is a wonder,  
 And were I a belted earl,  
 Without rocks or rhymes, by thunder,  
 I could gain that angel girl.

As Bradstreet my name ignores so,  
 As I wear no ducal crown,  
 This fair saint my heart adores so  
 Will most likely turn me down.



You, most beauteous luminary,  
Shall, while earthly life is mine,  
Occupy, as 'twere, the shrine  
In my warm heart's sanctuary.

I am glad that you are willing  
Thus to throw yourself into  
My arms outstretched, love, for you.  
'Tis romantic, aye! and thrilling.

By the door the trolleys clatter.  
What care we, though, for their jar?  
Worlds might crash anear or far,  
But to us, now, 'twould not matter.

This is not a cause for wonder.  
Whyfore heed these weird alarms?  
Thus encircled in my arms,  
Naught can e'er tear us asunder.

Life is strange—we meet, we part here.  
How inscrutable is Fate!  
Death! Can it e'er separate  
Our two selves pressed heart to heart here?

Hark! Dost hear? The bell, the bell, dear!  
Dinner's ready: break away.  
What, a kidney stew to-day?  
Good! I hope they've done it well, dear.

Clotilda, were you to allow  
Me on your lips to press—  
Or even on your cheek or brow—  
A billion, more or less,

Of kisses, I would set about  
The task forthwith: although  
A lifetime it would take no doubt  
The kisses to bestow.

When I think of a billion sweets  
(It is a goodly store)  
That heart of mine, Clotilda, beats  
As it did ne'er before.

---

## CLOTILDA.

I held her yesternight within these arms,  
And on her rose-hued lips I pressed, ye gods!  
Full many a kiss. But O! her myriad charms  
Were better told by laureated bards.

Aye, let the poets sing as ne'er before:  
Clotilda claims their homage; at her shrine  
Now may earth's gifted sons of song outpour  
Their surcharged hearts in melody divine.

I am, alas! no poet, else I might  
Expatriate in verses on her charms.  
Sufficeth it to say that yesternight  
I kissed and held Clotilda in these arms!

Was the first sinner not  
 A woman? Can you blot  
 That striking fact from life's historic page?  
 Has she not, through all time,  
 Shared in the deeds of crime  
 Performed by mortals on the world's broad stage?

But woman, ne'ertheless  
 Is fair, and we who press  
 To our warm hearts the fairest of the sex,  
 Should doubt not that truth lies  
 In her bright-beaming eyes.  
 Why should obtrusive doubts our souls perplex?

If woman has destroyed  
 Our peace by having toyed  
 With our fond hearts, what matters it? Although  
 Sore-stricken, we may live.  
 Live! Ah! then we'll forgive  
 The one who dealt the devastating blow.

---

VULNERABLE MAN.

For years a man may walk  
 Life's road, and he may talk  
 With women, and their friendship cultivate;  
 Through all love holds, it seems,  
 Aloof, and so he deems  
 Love powerless his will to dominate.

But O! there comes a day  
 When he meets on his way  
 A certain maid whose smiles on him alight,  
 And straightway to his heart  
 Hurtles a fiery dart,  
 And he—the man—is vanquished by love's might.

I ventured upon Christmas Day  
To send her just a little spray  
    Of mistletoe:  
Along with it—but why impart  
The fact that with it went my heart  
    To Miss Simcoe?

Perhaps, however, she divined  
That 'mongst those tender leaves was twined  
    A heart. If so,  
Did it the value of that bit  
Of green enhance? What mattered it  
    To Miss Simcoe?

Hearts! What are they? Men's hearts I mean.  
Mere toys for Beauty's use I ween;  
    Fate's spoils I trow.  
Enclosed in billets-doux, such things  
The laden postman daily brings  
    To Miss Simcoe.

Sometime perchance the mail may bring  
To her a toy, and on the thing  
    She will bestow  
More care than is her wont. Love may  
Yet its all-conquering force display  
    To Miss Simcoe.

But O! not mine, not mine, not mine  
It is to strike the spark divine,  
    And make it glow,  
Within that now unruffled breast,  
Bringing love's joy and love's unrest  
    To Miss Simcoe.

The heart that she possesses is  
 Not adamant—not quite, I wis.  
     Had I the “dough”  
 I’d soon make an impression there.  
 Nay, nay: this thought is most unfair  
     To Miss Simcoe.

In striving for her heart and hand  
 A multi-billionaire would stand  
     No better show  
 Than others. Worth and true love may  
 Find (here’s some hope for me) a way  
     To Miss Simcoe.

Yet in love’s quest how would I fare  
 When pitted ’gainst a billionaire?  
     I do not know.  
 I might some disadvantage slight  
 Be under. To find out I’ll write  
     To Miss Simcoe.

---

#### SUSTAINING A REPUTATION.

An event of a recent date  
     Is really worth telling—but why  
 So weird an occurrence narrate?  
     If I do they’ll think that I lie.

My record for ve-rac-i-ty  
     Must not be endangered, hence I  
 On certain occasions should be  
     Real silent else they’ll think I lie.

If one remains silent one will  
     Be deemed most veracious: I’ll try  
 To be taciturn. If I’m still  
     Who—who, then, can say that I lie?



*Addressed to Miss D. and the two Miss R's.*

Maud is a wit, this "aint no lie":

In fact, in this great city  
There's not another girl whom I  
Consider quite as witty.

That "mot" of hers, whilst she and Net  
Were waiting for a trolley,  
Was really great—but yet, but yet  
It made me melancholy:

For it implied that I was quite  
A wily kind of sinner,  
Who would not in *good faith* invite  
A friend or two to dinner.

Well, well. To show I was sincere  
When I addressed our lady,  
Let me extend to her right here,  
Also to Net and Sadie,

An invitation to partake  
Of various kinds of victuals.  
So name the day when we shall make  
A trip to Friend Doolittle's.

---

#### A STRANGE MYSTERY.

Of course I am minus a wife,  
Not having had in all my life  
A single sweetheart.  
Love has stood apart  
From me in the world's bitter strife.

And yet (here's a strange mystery!)  
I know what love is! Hope tells me  
That love—this divine  
Gift—is to be mine  
Some day, when my soul will be free.

*Written on the eve of Miss Mack's departure from town.*

Farewell, Miss Mack.  
I'll wish you back,  
For without you there'll be a lack  
Of joy, I fear;  
And I shall sigh  
At times, and I  
Perhaps—ah yes! perhaps I'll die  
Without you here.

At any rate,  
My grief is great.  
'Tis useless, though, to rail at fate:  
Hence I intend  
To banish care.  
I shan't despair,  
For I again may see my fair  
And sweet young friend.

So fare you well;  
I dare not tell  
The thoughts that now within me dwell.  
I can but say  
That 'mid my woe  
Hope's star shall glow;  
Thus I'll be comforted, I know,  
When you're away.

Of course I grieve  
To see you leave,  
And, as I mentioned, I shall heave  
A sigh or two;  
But I'll not die—  
That is, if my  
Poor verses gain a kind reply  
Some day from you.

This world's a bright one—yes, and I  
 Am happy; often I ask why  
     It is that I extract  
 Such joy from life. Well, it may be  
 Because I'm single. Possibly  
     It is due to that fact.

I'm glad, sometimes, that I'm alive.  
 How fortunate 'tis to derive  
     Life's maximum of good  
 And minimum of ill! How true  
 It is that this glad state is due  
     Wholly to bachelorhood.

Surely, I'm happy; yes, quite so.  
 That is I am not sad. O no!  
     Blest is the single life.  
 Yes, yes; and to-night when I see  
 Her I'll—no, yes, ask her to be  
     My—er—well yes, my wife!

---

#### A SENSIBLE GIRL.

He asked her if she'd be his bride,  
 She begged him for time to decide.  
     I'd like greatly to wed,  
     But one must not, she said,  
 Seem too anxious to have the knot tied.

You're perfectly right; yes, my dear,  
 A modest maid must not appear  
     Too precipitous; so  
     Take twelve months—O! my no,  
 Let's wed now: whyfore waste a whole year?

O! what in rhythmic manner may  
I touch upon? What seems  
The likeliest topic? Tell me, pray—  
There are so many themes.

Hate? Surely not. Love? Well, love wears  
A comelier face; although  
I'm scarcely "up" in heart affairs,  
As doubtless some folks know.

I have a smattering knowledge of  
Theft, penury and crime;  
But really, when it comes to love  
I'm nonplussed every time.

Yet Love's a thief—he steals one's heart:  
Love makes one poor at times:  
Love plays a most conspicuous part  
In many tragic crimes.

Love comes at first like zephyrs soft—  
Zephyrs that turn, alack!  
To wild cyclonic whirlwinds oft,  
With dread death in their track.

This I have learned not from my own  
Experience; I go  
To cold statistics, which alone  
Have taught me all I know.

Yes, o'er statistics I have pored,  
Yet of Love's ambient flame  
I know but little. 'T would afford  
Me joy should some one name

An easier theme. What fills the bill?  
Death? Drunkenness? Despair?  
Or shall I tackle love, that will  
Be thought by some more fair.

Love let it be; yet Love's draught may  
Intoxicate, and there  
Is death oftentimes where Love holds sway;  
And lovers may despair.

Thus love embraces all of ill,  
And all of good as well:  
It has a heaven, and one will  
Observe it has a hell.

Alas! that one in youth's bright morn  
Should find life not all joy;  
That "there's no rose without a thorn",  
No bliss without alloy:

That friends may prove unkind, that much  
"Which glitters is not gold",  
That there, alas! is even such  
A thing as love turned cold.

These truths, however sad, must be  
Learned either soon or late;  
And forewarned is forearmed, you see,  
Against an adverse fate.

I've learned perhaps a thing or two  
Unknown in callow days.  
My pleasures now may be more few,  
But then in various ways

I'm recompensed: life still I find  
Is worth the living: yes,  
One's not bereft, when friends are kind,  
Of every happiness.

And if I ever build such things  
As airy castles, or  
List sometimes to the songs Hope sings  
Whilst o'er my books I pore,

Who may object? E'en if of love  
Hope sings I'll list: for why  
May I not know the rapture of  
That feeling ere I die?



*Dedicated to the five young ladies who on one occasion so inaccurately guessed the number of years the writer may be said to have lived.*

Some say I'm more than thirty-four,  
While others say I'm less;  
And so it goes, nobody knows,  
They can but only guess.

The maidens five cannot arrive  
At my age it appears.  
Unless I state my natal date,  
They can't compute my years.

But I propose now to disclose  
My age: 'tis best I'm told  
Not to deny the fact that I  
Am growing somewhat old.

Well, let me say 'twas on the day  
That I Miss Z first saw  
When life for me began, you see:  
Hence my years number four.

Four years ago I met her, so  
Just that long it appears  
I've lived. Yes, yes! I must confess  
My age is just four years.

O bliss supreme! My life's a dream!  
I know what 'tis to love!  
For this divine joy which is mine  
I thank the gods above.

The mortal who (this is most true)  
Loves not can not be said  
To live; but O! don't ask me, though,  
How long I have been dead.

Who is Miss Z will doubtless be  
The question now. Well, well,  
She's sweet and fair, has golden hair:  
Her name—no, I won't tell.

## A GOOD EXCUSE.

Time that is given o'er  
To rhyming is ill spent;  
The world wants something more  
Than studied sentiment.

There may be no excuse  
For handing out in times  
As hard as these such loose  
And vain and careless rhymes.

I am full well aware  
That life is sad. I would  
Lighten the gloom and care  
In men's minds if I could.

It seems a brutal thing,  
Yes, almost like a crime,  
When men are suffering,  
To write light frothy rhyme.

'T were glorious to be  
A benefactor to  
The race; but some things " we "  
Poet's can't really do.

Bards lack the where-with-all  
To be philanthropists;  
And yet to duty's call  
A true bard always lists.

I am in one respect  
A bard—slim is my purse.  
But this does not reflect  
On my heart or my verse.

My heart is right, and though  
My rhymes are vague and loose,  
Yet they are harmless; so  
I have a good excuse.

Rhymes, although careless, may  
Bring cheer sometimes to one;  
If my lines do, who'll say  
That I a wrong have done?

If beneath the mistletoe  
I should meet you, Miss Pitcoe,  
Would a kiss be apropos?  
Prithee tell me, Miss Pitcoe.

---

## O SUPPOSING!

O! supposing that it chances  
I should see you, fair Miss Frances,  
'Neath the Yuletide's mystic branches,  
What then might I do, Miss Frances?

---

## NIGHT'S WITCHING HOUR.

I see as night's mid hour advances  
A star—the one that most enhances  
Heaven's beauty above:  
It reminds me so of  
My life's guiding star, which is—Frances.

---

## BREAK OF DAY.

The night has departed, and lo!  
The orient heavens now glow  
With the radiant hues  
Of a new morning, whose  
Beauty calls to my mind—Miss Pitcoe.

---

## A CHALLENGE.

Do I not love impartially and well?  
Study the four short poems placed above,  
Two to each star. I challenge men to tell  
Which of those stars I the more truly love.

Daily this girl doth occupy  
 My thoughts ; of her at night  
 I dream ; I can't well work now ; I  
 Have lost my appetite.

These probably are symptoms of  
 The master passion, though  
 I ne'er had much to do with love,  
 Hence how am I to know?

I judge, however, that I'm in  
 Love's fierce throes, so to speak ;  
 Else why is it I grow so thin,  
 So pale, and O, so weak?

Heart-bred complaints, though, seldom do  
 Cause death ; statistics prove  
 That men succumb, but rarely to  
 The ravages of love.

I may survive. 'Tis Shakespeare who  
 Says, " Men have died " (that's so)  
 " And worms have eaten them " (how true)  
 " But not for love "—Ah, no.

---

STAY.

I would that contention and strife  
 And doubts and heartaches were less rife.  
 I want peace—not love, no :  
 Love distracts one, and so  
 It is peace—peace I want in this life.

Peace, peace ! But there is none, I fear :  
 Not while you, of all women, are here.  
 Yet with all its unrest,  
 Love, yes, love may be best.  
 So stay with me, stay with me, dear !

Could I but spread my heart before her eyes,  
So she might know the love a-seething there,  
My soul would then sing in the happy skies,  
And not, as now, pine here in sheer despair.

If only—no, the realizing of  
A dream so blest can ne'er, alas! be mine;  
I cannot adequately tell my love;  
My mute harp sheds no melody divine.

I'm told, and I'm inclined to think it so,  
That those who struggle in the grasp of some  
O'ermastering passion lose their usual flow  
Of oral language and become as dumb.

Sometimes I almost wish I loved her less;  
I then could speak with more assurance of  
My adoration. I am, I confess,  
A victim of unutterable love.

---

## UNUTTERED THOUGHTS.

My thoughts seem not unfrequently  
To verge on the sublime,  
Yet I lack the ability  
To utter them in rhyme.

'T would add to the world's happiness  
If, in befitting verse,  
The wealth of thoughts that I possess  
I could sometimes disburse.

But this I cannot do, and so  
The world must roll along  
As best it may; I'd like to, though,  
Just help it with a song.

The girl that I love I call Rose;  
 I do so, as everyone knows,  
     Because that is her name;  
     I’d as lief call her “Mame”  
 Were she so baptized, I suppose.

If it were allowable here  
 To quote the immortal Shakespeare,  
     I’d say “What’s in a name!”  
     Call a girl Rose or Mame—  
 What you will—she is none the less dear.

Mame or Rose, Kate or Blanch, Grace or Pearl,  
 Madge or May—ah! a girl is a girl  
     For all that. None need fear  
     Thus to paraphrase here  
 Burns’s line. He who fears is a churl.

It is clearly apparent that my  
 Regard for the fair sex is high;  
     That I am partial to  
     The specimens who  
 Are youthful I will not deny.

A poet’s heart, everyone knows,  
 With love for some woman o’erflows—  
     Burns loved Mary; Shakespeare  
     In his youth held most dear  
 Ann Hathaway; I adore Rose!

Great Dante loved Beatrice well,  
 As for Petrarch—ah! his sonnets tell  
     How hopeless, how long,  
     How vain, yet how strong  
 Was that love he through life could not quell.

We all have our Lauras no doubt.  
 A hopeless love is not without  
     Its use. Is love wrong  
     Which gives birth to a song  
 The world could not well do without?



When a fellow has reached forty,  
 And has never married, ought he  
 Heed those self-established censors who condemn the single life?  
 They scold the bachelors freely,  
 These critics do, but really,  
 What right have they to carp because a man takes not a wife?

They say that all should marry—  
 Every Tom and Dick and Harry.  
 If any can't afford to, why, it matters not a jot.  
 A man who weds not, they say,  
 Is selfish; well, but may they  
 Not err in this? Are men who wed less selfish? I think not.

Let me state here most briefly  
 Why men marry. It is chiefly  
 For love—the worthiest motive; wealth and station, too, some seek.  
 All look for joy in mating,  
 Which is proper; but stop prating  
 About how selfish men are who from matrimony keep.

I'm fond of life. I love it;  
 I like all there is of it.  
 Men, women, children, birds and flowers—I like all these. Ah yes!  
 I also like the jingle  
 Of gold. And I am single.  
 To be a Benedict the wherewithal one should possess.

— — —

### DANGER.

Bumptious bachelors better beware.  
 By blandishment blooming blondes bear  
 Away from men their  
 Foolish hearts, and hence where  
 Women are we men ought to take care.

OR

## LOVE'S FUTURE POSSIBILITIES.

From me 'twould be folly to seek  
New facts about love, for I can  
Impart none; I have, so to speak,  
Been ever a womanless man.

I once thought—'twas when I was young—  
I could fathom Love's sighs, smiles and fears,  
Its joys and its griefs; but I've sung  
Not of such things for many long years.

In youth I believed that I knew  
How to love. No, my heart is not stone;  
In Love's cause it might have proved true,  
Yet I walk along life's way—alone.

A womanless man. Yes, ah yes!  
And yet, though with life I'm near done,  
I feel even now I possess  
The power of loving—some one.

Perhaps, yes, perhaps I'll be given  
A chance to partake some day of  
Love's sweets. Ah! I may meet in heaven  
One who'll love me and whom I shall love.

Love's coming delights! O, how dear  
They are! No, my heart is not stone,  
Else it could not be stirred by Hope's cheer,  
As I pass through life's last scenes—alone.

My life has been so humdrum, so  
Barren of valiant deeds of late.  
In order to please Blanche, I know  
I should do something truly great.  
I fancied that she looked askance  
At me last night; when I called she  
Was reading an oldtime romance,  
Whose hero she described to me.  
She's fond of heroines, but dotes  
Much more on heroes, so she states:  
Their noble sentiments she quotes.  
A villain she just fairly hates.  
Most kindly is that heart of hers;  
Its sympathies she can't control;  
Griefs of fictitious characters  
Disturb her sympathetic soul.  
The novel, in which Blanche was so  
Absorbed when I arrived, had for  
Its hero one whom she had no  
Doubt she could worship and adore.  
He was her ideal, so she said—  
This creature of a writer's brain.  
She wept o'er his woes, the tears shed  
By her fell on the book like rain.  
She dwelt, till I got up to go,  
Upon his virtues. It was late  
When I departed. This hero  
I feel constrained to imitate.  
Yes, if I do not soon bestir  
Myself, Blanche may think I am weak;  
I must, to win a smile from her,  
Create a furore, so to speak.  
Our Longfellow says that a man  
Should "be a hero in the strife".  
This gentle bard thinks no one can  
Succeed who lives the simple life.  
I've got to do some stirring act—  
Something heroic to retain  
Fair Blanche's favor; though, in fact,  
My efforts may be wholly vain.

Despite the confession I made you,  
Despite my behavior so mild,  
Despite sundry compliments paid you,  
You yet, in a way that is wild,

Impugn my last statement, which I, dear,  
Reiterate now as the truth.  
Why you e'en assert that I lie, dear,  
With rashness peculiar to youth.

In your needless frenzy you blindly,  
Without any semblance of shame,  
Revive a dispute that I kindly  
Had sworn no more to rename.

Thus in your anger proceeding,  
At times verging on the profane,  
You lash the poor heart that lies bleeding  
From your pitiless satiric strain.

At times your remarks are real witty,  
And elegant language you use,  
Yet language devoid of all pity  
Its charms, in a measure, doth lose.

There is in my heart's depths a chord, dear,  
That would in a sweet unison  
Tune with love if you but afford, dear,  
A reason—ah yes! only one.

Love, though, you would try to demolish,  
That chord you would fain have unstrung,  
And Truth—that pure jewel—abolish,  
And with grief a heart you'd have wrung.

O base is the one that could do so!  
This deed I consider most vile.  
It shocks me to think, dear, that you so  
Admire—or seem to—such guile.

Tenacious as those ties may be, dear,  
That bind us yet they can't withhold,  
Nor sarcastic epistles to me, dear,—  
For you are (on paper) quite bold—

Restrain me through fear from replying  
To your last epistle, wherein  
You intimate that I am lying,  
And style my “confess” as “too thin”.

At a disadvantage you take me;  
You knew I had promised to let  
Peace bide in my heart, though you make me  
My kind resolution regret.

However, I'll not be incited  
To anger; though much I've forborne,  
I'll treat the last note you indited  
With dignified coolness and scorn.

I'll put a restraint on my ire:  
I'll leave it for time to show you  
How false is your charge of satire—  
How wrongly my note you construe.

Though flagrant has been your transgression  
Yet time, dear, *might* make you more wise:  
'T will prove how sincere 's the confession  
Which you call a “shallow disguise”.

The scales that adhere to your eyes, dear,  
Can not remain there very long.  
You surely must soon realize, dear,  
How greatly you are in the wrong.

You will, doubtless, in your next letter  
 Acknowledge how hasty you've been,  
 And promise henceforth to act better  
 And strive my affection to win.

*Postscript.*

When reading the above,  
 Which I wrote out of love,  
 I trust you'll not proceed with fierce asperity  
 To crush me with your store  
 Of esoteric lore,  
 And satirize me with your old severity.

O! for the nonce I pray  
 That you will not give way  
 To wild outbursts of passion that avail not.  
 Let Reason hold control  
 O'er your young, reckless soul,  
 And then methinks your arguments shall fail not.

---

POETRY.

"There is a pleasure in poetic pains  
 Which only poets know." —Cowper.

Whenever I essay to write  
 In verse it seems I get  
 A bad headache; and yet, despite  
 My sufferings, I let

My fancy range. I find it hard  
 My soul's flight to restrain.  
 The joy such flights afford a bard  
 Is not unmixed with pain.

In this art, though, I must maintain  
 There is a special need  
 For us who write to stand the strain.  
 Oh, think of those who read!



Jane Brown came, so to speak, into  
My life when I was twenty-one.  
When youth meets youth beside the blue  
Sea a romance is oft begun.

This proved to be the very case  
With us whilst recreating at  
The shore ; before I left the place  
We were engaged—no doubt of that.

Jane was just eighteen, slim and tall,  
Her eyes were bright and deeply blue,  
Her nose *retroussé*, her waist small,  
Her hair was of a Titian hue.

We loved—O how we loved ! we two,  
Beside the happy summer sea.  
My time was up before I knew ;  
The ten days passed so speedily.

Perhaps when wooing on that shore  
I too exuberantly spoke ;  
I told Jane I had skads galore,  
The fact was I was nearly broke.

When next we met it was in town ;  
Somehow the girl I was to wed  
Learned that I worked ; and so Miss Brown,  
Without compunction, cut me dead.

I managed to survive the blow ;  
That chapter of my life is closed.  
Of late I have been thinking, though,  
Of Jane to whom I once proposed.

Prithee bring to me my lyre.

O! an anxious world has long  
Looked for an inspired song;  
I'll now sing it, or expire.

Woman, thou art (mark my nerve here)  
Heaven's latest, not least though,  
Gift to man: this is, you know,  
A Miltonian thought I serve here.

Women are, I'm proud to shout this.  
*Almost* angels. Ah! I feel  
There is one who is the real  
Thing—that's Sadie. Who can doubt this?

Were my wandering soul e'er lost in  
The immensity of space,  
Its way homeward it could trace  
By thy bright smiles, Sadie Austin.

I should state that I'm addressing  
The sex in a general way,  
Though Sade moves me most to say:—  
Thou, O woman, art a blessing.

If from Manayunk to Boston  
Girls were banished, would life be  
Worth the living? Not for me.  
What were life without Miss Austin?

Life would be without my Sadie's  
Smiles a veritable—well,  
I had better not say "hell";  
No, I'll simply call it hades.

'Tis my heart that I'm revealing  
In these lines I'm getting off.  
Who can read them and then scoff?  
Surely no one of deep feeling.

Go, efface the stars that made the  
Heavens yesternight so fair;  
Blot the sun out, but don't tear  
From my heart the form of Sadie.

---

FRIEND FERDINAND.

*(A study in psychology.)*

Ferdie, my friend, stood on the curb,  
Enwrapped in thought was he;  
It seemed a pity to disturb  
His quiet reverie.

But I was seeking knowledge, so  
I asked him to explain  
Just why it was that people go  
In-doors when it doth rain.

He corrugated then his brow,  
And, after quite a pause,  
Exclaimed "Ah yes! I have it now—  
To psychologic laws

"I turn for the solution of  
This seeming mystery,  
And now like death, like life, like love,  
It all is clear to me:

"Psychology explains, dear sir,  
The whyfore of the why.  
That is to say, most folks prefer  
To keep their garments dry:

"Hence"—"Stop," cried I, "a great light breaks  
In on my muddled brain,  
I see now why a person takes  
To shelter in the rain:

"It is, ah yes! because that he  
Desires to *keep dry*."

"Just so," said Ferdinand, "but we  
Do not." He winked his eye.

"O Ferdie! your philosophy  
Is sound; I feel I ought  
To thank you, for you've given me  
This night much food for thought.

"How, how can I repay?" Again  
My dear friend Ferdie cast  
On me a subtle glance, and then—  
Yes, I "caught on" at last.

"Do you object to being 'soaked'?"  
I asked, and with a grin  
He answered—"no." He knew I joked,  
And so we two went *in*.

We two went in—I won't say where,  
But we went in all right;  
And many moral topics there  
We touched upon that night.

We grew most eloquent at times;  
In fact, between the drinks  
We—no, I'd better stop these rhymes:  
I've said enough methinks.

Mary, you are looking splendid.  
A mere handshake—nothing more!  
Say, what are those red lips for?  
O! for what were they intended?

Shall I know their sweetness ever?  
Tell me, O! do tell me this.  
Let me know, too, what's a kiss.  
You might teach me: you're so clever.

Pray, be my delineator—  
My osculatory guide.  
Mary, Fate hath long denied  
Me so fair a demonstrator.

Show me how to go about it.  
Must my arm surround your waist?  
All right: good! I like the taste  
Of these kisses. Do you doubt it?

There's no world as fair as this,  
Nor as happy. Ah! 'tis so  
Because now I've learned to know  
From your lips just what a kiss is.

Wait an instant, my arm's slipping;  
I shall hold you tighter—thus.  
What if I your ringlets muss  
When Joy's rosiest wine we're sipping!

In well doing one can't weary,  
So they say, and, truth to tell,  
I am doing very well.  
Tired? What a foolish query!

Come, another : don't be chary.  
 In this there is nothing wrong.  
 Just one more, one sweet and—long.  
 Yes, I rather like this, Mary.

Must we part now? What's the hurry?  
 Well, goodbye, goodbye, goodbye.  
 I could do this till I die.  
 Yes, I'll call again, don't worry.

---

THE RIGHT BAIT.

When I had my "little pile",  
 When I basked in Fortune's smile,  
 'Twas then I wooed and then I won my Kate.  
 Now I've lost my all, and she  
 Has, alas! rejected me.  
 Fool that I was to go and speculate!

"Cheer up, old chap," I'm told,  
 "Though your girl has, like your gold,  
 "Gone where the woodbines twine, rail not 'gainst fate :  
 "Still in the sea one ought  
 "To find good fish uncaught."  
 True, but you see I now have not the bait.

---

REPARTEE.

Give me a penny and then I  
 Will tell my thoughts—what do you say?  
 No, no ; your thoughts ; was her reply,  
 Are not worth, sir, such an outlay.

You may be right, I answered. Yes,  
 As a rule, my thoughts are, 't is true,  
 Not worth a cent ; now they're worth less ;  
 I've just been thinking, dear, of you.



“Practice makes perfect.” Yes, but I  
The axiom would qualify  
Somewhat ;  
If it were true, then I would be  
A famous poet, which, you see,  
I’m not.

When a mere child I lisped in rhyme,  
So I’ve been at it now sometime.  
O dear !  
Of late I’ve felt I never will  
Be quite as world-renowned as Bill  
Shakespeare.

I’ve practiced and have tried as hard  
Perhaps as Stratford’s noted bard  
To gain  
The approbation of men in  
This world ; my efforts, though, have been  
In vain.

Once with some verses I essayed  
To win the favor of a maid.  
How rash !  
She was my world—too high I aimed ;  
She read my verses, then exclaimed :  
“What trash !”

This criticism seemed unkind.  
Yet, though it brought unto my mind  
Distress,  
It taught me one most useful thing—  
That practice does not always bring  
Success.

Assuredly imagination fills

A human want ; humdrum indeed would be  
Existence here without that which instills  
Into all lives a little gayety.

Wherefore, then, is the wrong in living in  
A fancied world, peopled by souls that glow  
With kindliness—a world where one may win  
That love for which the heart doth hunger so.

Nor is it wrong to prate, as some do, of  
Things one ne'er knew or may know ; I myself  
Do frequently expatiate on love ;  
I'm apt also to dwell on fame and wealth.

Yet the fact is that I with all such things  
Am unfamiliar ; still I'm not dismayed.  
A rhymer manages to rhyme who brings  
Imagination freely to his aid.

Were poets barred (I surely mean no pun)  
From exercising in their art divine  
Fancy's rare gift, the world then would have none  
Of Shakespeare's lines and few, but few of mine!

---

#### A FOOLISH QUESTION.

Have I e'er loved? Most certainly.  
A man of fifty must have done  
At times some loving. Why ask me  
This question? 'Tis a foolish one.

Yes, I have loved ; but whether they  
Who in past days my fancy caught  
Ever returned my love—but nay,  
About such details I'll say naught.

In youth my hopes were high ; 'twas then I sought  
The favor of the Muse, and life seemed sweet ;  
I dreamt of love, of fame, of wealth ; methought  
The world before long would be at my feet.

I've striven hard through many lonely years  
To gain the honors youth conceived ; but now  
My mind is sore perplexed, for it appears  
Those honors have eluded me somehow.

The Muse heeds not my passionate appeal ;  
My most vociferous calls she fails to hear ;  
And consequently some concern I feel  
Respecting my poetical career.

I almost fear the world will never care  
To laud me very highly if at all.  
I'm gradually beginning to despair,  
Now since the Muse responds not to my call.

---

### MY FINISH.

I've wooed her in a way that seemed to me  
No mortal girl could possibly withstand ;  
Yet, spite of my impetuosity,  
I have thus far failed to secure her hand.

Yes, this fair girl—the fairest of them all—  
To my appeals has seemed of late to turn  
A deafened ear. I totter to my fall ;  
My ultimate extinction I discern.

I knew not if her hair was light  
Or dark, or if 'twas brown or red ;  
To keep it dry she had, drawn tight,  
An oil-skin cap upon her head.

Her face I saw—she had blue eyes ;  
I saw her shapely arms ; I saw  
Her other shapely limbs likewise.  
A bloomer bathing-suit she wore.

A natty swimming garment, none  
Too cumbersome : her shoulders—bare  
And spray-splashed—glistened in the sun.  
I saw most all else but her hair.

I saw her forehead—not those locks  
Which crowned the same : I saw her nose,  
And mouth, and chin ; she wore no socks,  
And so I saw her dimpled toes.

She wore a smile and not much more,  
But one in summer must get near  
To nature ; when on Jersey's shore  
One has to show good form, 'tis clear.

Her beauteous curves could not escape  
Detection ; 'twere those tresses of  
Hers that lay hidden—not her shape,  
For her suit fitted like a glove.

I saw a great deal of that fair  
Young girl, yes, a great deal that day.  
And yet the color of her hair  
I know not, I regret to say.

Still, though unable to behold  
Her crowning glory, should I feel  
Cast down ? Nay, I'm somewhat consoled :  
I saw, as I've said, a great deal !

We met by chance,  
 'Twas on the pier;  
 Her artless glance  
 Drew me anear;

I bowed, and ere  
 We knew it, we  
 Were talking there  
 Most earnestly.

We talked and sipped  
 Cool drinks, the while  
 My heart was gripped  
 By her sweet smile.

Her smile likewise  
 My dazed brain seemed  
 To hypnotize;  
 I slept and dreamed.

I woke with pain;  
 Folks 'round me jeered;  
 My watch and chain  
 Had disappeared.

Some one also  
 Had swiped my purse.  
 Rough? Yes, but O!  
 What was far worse,

The lady of  
 Those smiles so kind,  
 My new, true love,  
 I could not find.

Ere I keeled o'er  
 In that strange faint  
 There at the shore,  
 This fair young saint

Drew close to tell,  
 With tenderness,  
 Her name as well  
 As her address.

Then, whilst her low  
 Voice sounded sweet,  
 I fell, as though  
 Dead, at her feet.

Where now is she?  
 Ah! I infer  
 They who robbed me  
 Have kidnapped her.

When I lay dead  
 To the world they  
 Then spirited  
 My love away.

My dream of bliss,  
 Alas! is o'er.  
 I meant on this  
 Health-giving shore

A week to stay;  
 I left there, "broke",  
 The second day.  
 It was no joke.

My lost one! Where  
 Is she? To my  
 Sad soul's cry there  
 Comes no reply.

## 'TWEEN SALES.

Behind the far  
 End counter, where  
 The bargains are  
 In ribbons rare,

I stand; and oft  
 'Tween sales, ah me!  
 I hear the soft  
 Sound of the sea.

And so I grieve  
 And sigh sometimes,  
 And, 'tween sales, weave  
 Clandestine rhymes

About a shore  
 On which waves dash—  
 Er—*yes, three for*  
*Ten cents. Thanks. Cash!*

---

 IN DOUBT.

O, to be loved! and, O, to love!  
 And I would like to know  
 Which of the two confers more of  
 Real joy and which more woe.

I love, but reciprocity  
 Therein may not, look you,  
 Be mine: hence loving causes me  
 A poignant pang or two.

And so, as one might well infer,  
 I wish to ascertain  
 Whether my joy, if loved by her,  
 Would be devoid of pain.



Last night I called upon Louise ;  
About the hour of nine  
I threw myself down on my knees,  
And asked her to be mine.

The proffered honor she declined ;  
A speedy death seemed my  
Only recourse ; I changed my mind,  
I was too young to die.

And so, strange as it may appear,  
I did not last night blow  
Out my poor brains. I still live here  
In this sad world below.

My life, of course, is blighted, yet  
I need not quite despond,  
I know a very nice brunette,  
Yes, nicer than the blonde.

This haughty blonde who rudely threw  
Me down but yesternight  
Is not the only maiden who  
Lives on the earth—not quite.

A man in courting must, indeed,  
Be philosophic ; when  
With the first girl you don't succeed,  
Call elsewhere—try again.

“ There are as good fish in the sea  
As e'er were caught,” they say ;  
And if I persevere, ah me !  
I may land one some day.

No man is perfect ; very few  
 Women are absolutely so.  
 This statement which I make is true ;  
 I'm more frank than chivalrous though.

But I am, and have ever been,  
 A stickler for truth ; that's why  
 A woman I may never win :  
 I cannot flatter—cannot lie.

---

#### DIPLOMACY.

Are women angels? I don't know ;  
 Perhaps they are ; quite often, sir,  
 [With mental reservation, though,]  
 I speak of them as if they were.

When we write verses or propose  
 A woman's health those doubts which most  
 Perplex us we need not disclose.  
 Why spoil a rhyme or mar a toast?

I, diplomatically, call  
 Women angelic ; while I know  
 They are not saints, that is, not *all*,  
 Still it seems best to call them so.

Men cannot be too fulsome when  
 Upon the fair they lavish praise.  
 Brave words, not deeds, enable men  
 To win a woman nowadays.

---

#### TRUE VALOR.

When I meet a guy on the street  
 Who calls me a bleary deadbeat,  
 Do I tell him he lies?  
 Yes, if he's half my size.  
 I'm fearless, but not indiscreet.

Should critics style my poems crude,  
Should connoisseurs of verse conclude  
That I am no—er—well, no prude,  
    I'd feel but slight surprise.  
'Tis true, I call a spade a spade ;  
Since Thursday night last, when I played  
That game of cards, I've been afraid  
    To call one otherwise.

On that most fateful round that night  
I held both bowers, left and right,  
And clubs were trumps, which pleased me quite ;  
    The stakes were high, not low.  
My spirits, too, were high ; we all  
Were feeling fine ; each one could call  
For what he wanted ; a high ball  
    I had, some beers also.

I held three spades, one of the same  
I—not without a sense of shame—  
Tried hard to pass off in the game  
    As a club, but they saw  
Me thus finessing ; they arose  
And swatted me ; they bruised my nose,  
And blacked my eye, and tore my clothes,  
    And kicked me on the floor.

In life I've had my ups and downs,  
More downs than ups though ; yes, Fate's frowns  
And crosses, not her smiles and crowns,  
    Have been mine ; still I've made  
Some progress in the world. Ah, who  
Has failed to learn a thing or two  
In life's stern strife? I've learnt, look you,  
    To call a spade a spade.

## A PURPOSEFUL POEM.

*The purpose being the reconciliation of two young ladies who unfortunately have differed over an inconsequential matter.*

'Tis hot—red hot, and I am sitting  
 Upon the curb in front our door ;  
 Though such a seat is unbefitting  
 One dealing in poetic lore.

Yet, as I said, 'tis hot, and so I  
 Fain some pleasant nook would seek ;  
 And here, where gutter zephyrs blow, I  
 Am quite happy, so to speak.

But not alone the gutter breezes  
 Cause me such perfect bliss of mind ;  
 'Tis memory that ofttimes pleases  
 More than those joys of carnal kind.

And now, far more than balmy airs do,  
 Memory my mind doth cheer :  
 All sorrows, griefs, all pains and cares do  
 (Happy riddance!) disappear :

And many a pleasant, fleeting hour  
 Far in the past I think me of :  
 Living them o'er by memory's power  
 With these two fair young maids I love.

The one a blonde of figure slight, yet  
 Well proportioned is the dame ;  
 The other equally as bright, yet  
 Of a somewhat larger frame.

Their names—ah! I cannot express them  
 Without feeling quite a thrill :  
 Friends familiarly address them  
 Oftentimes as Ann and Lill.

Each one is O ! so sweetly utter,  
Their minds with knowledge, too, are fill'd ;  
The slight maid sets my heart aflutter  
No less than she of larger build.

And yet it grieves me—grieves me greatly  
To think that now those two should be  
Estranged, when their young hearts so lately  
Glowed warm with love's serenity.

But yesterday the ties that bound them  
Seemed of such durability :  
Now in the storm that swirls around them  
How insecure they seem to be.

Are those ties to be rent asunder !  
Is love to hatred thus to change !  
Ah, on the curb I sit and wonder :  
Such things I deem as passing strange.

Alas ! that love's pure spark should die out,  
That friendship should to hatred grow.  
In agony I almost cry out ;  
I feel such sudden ruptures so.

Shall those maids ever be as strangers ?  
Shall they drift more and more apart ?  
Ah ! time, that works so many changes,  
May reunite each severed heart.

Yes, as the years pass onward, they will  
Learn to forgive and to forget.  
Pleasant it is to think some day will  
See those maidens dear friends yet.

A lifetime passed without forgiving !  
Two hearts seared by the fires of hate !  
Who, 'mid these mundane scenes are living,  
Can calmly such things contemplate ?

It cannot be, and thus I know the  
 Reconciliation grand  
 Shall come: all indications show the  
 Happy day is near at hand.

One feels it in the air. The twitter  
 Of the birds on Fawcett's tree  
 Foretells to me, the curbstone sitter,  
 That love triumphant soon will be.

Knowing, therefore, those two shall meet and  
 Bosom friends be as before,  
 I'll now forsake my curbstone seat and  
 To an end these verses draw.

So fare thee well, O! maiden slender,  
 And thou whose form is not so frail.  
 Within my heart that passion tender  
 For both those maids shall e'er prevail.

And though at Crystal Lake friend Lill is,  
 Distance can ne'er make her less dear:  
 And though friend Ann at far Bushkill is,  
 I love as if she now were here.

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FAWCETT'S TREE.

*(Written twenty-seven years after Curbstone Musings.)*

How often in the ample shade  
 Of Fawcett's tree I've sat and wooed  
 The Muse, while on the boughs that swayed  
 Above me the birds billed and cooed.

By ruthless hands that tree has been  
 Uprooted—that old maple tree,  
 Which flourished so and blossomed in  
 The days that were so dear to me.



One oft is disappointed when  
 In the possession of  
 A wished-for object ; let me, then,  
 But dream of her I love.

Let me lie in the shade of this  
 Tall and umbrageous fir  
 And dream, just dream. O ! it is bliss  
 To dream, to dream—of her !

Delusions ! Well, if dreams be so,  
 What then ? Ah ! I prefer  
 To hug delusions rather—no,  
 I'd rather, much, hug her.

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### THE SHIP OF STATE

OR

### VOTES FOR WOMEN.

If woman be given a vote,  
 The Ship of State, we're told, will float  
 With more grace on life's seas.  
 Is there need, though, in these  
 Days for woman to *man* any boat ?

The idea my mind somewhat shocks.  
 Why should womankind shed her frocks  
 And don sailor togs ?  
 Is our Ship in the fogs,  
 And foundering now on the rocks ?

The hand which once rocked to and fro  
 A babe's cradle is, as we know,  
 Losing its kindly grip  
 On the same. Does the ship  
 Need that guiding hand now ? Maybe so.

"In sooth I know not why I am so sad."—Shakespeare.

I'm sad. Why? I don't know.

I'm in the best of health;

There are no debts I owe;

I've a fair store of wealth.

I dance, am fond of balls;

I should be happy quite;

The clubs and music halls

Are my chief haunts at night.

I golf, play bridge, I mote;

I've hosts of friends, no foes.

I'm in the swim; I dote

On horse and canine shows.

Pleasure by night and day

I strenuously woo;

Why, then, O! tell me, pray,

Do I at times feel blue?

My appetite is good;

The girl I love loves me;

The day is bright. Why should

I so unhappy be?

My spirits should be high

Instead of being low.

Yes, I am sad; but why,

I really do not know.

Why, at times, do we sigh

When suffering no pain?

This is a problem I,

For one, can not explain.

THE FRIDAY EVENING READING CLUB. 99

*To each and every fair member thereof this poem is respectfully  
dedicated.*

I am no bard (it needs not this confession  
To prove the fact) and yet should I to-night  
Invoke the Muse, would it be a transgression!  
How would The Club view my poetic flight;

What would those learnèd members say, I wonder,  
If for a theme their club I were to choose?  
Alas, what doubts and fears I labor under!  
P rhaps I had'nt ought to call the Muse.

However, I shall try the rhythmic racket:  
Despite my fears, in Poesy's realms I'll soar.  
[Though I should state here, in a sort of bracket,  
That I'm no poet, as I said before.]

Yet would "The Club"—a theme so grandly thrilling—  
Excite the prosiest mind; and so, perchance,  
If the dear members of that club are willing  
To scan these lines, they might repay a glance.

The Club—The Reading Club! O how I love it!  
I love it for my sisters' sake, and yet  
Those other fellows' sisters who are of it  
Cause me to love it none the less, you bet.

Methinks this club, devoted so to reading,  
Would captivate all hearts as it hath mine;  
[But here, e'er further in these lines proceeding,  
I'd say that rhyming is not in my line.]

The Club I love—let me this fact state clearly—  
Not solely as an institution, for  
Each individual member I love dearly:  
Each individual member I adore.

And I would in a reverential manner  
Breathe, as it were, their sweet baptismal names :  
I would begin with Lillian and Anna,  
The appellations of two charming dames.

They—these two maidens—are associated  
With my life's brightest joys ; had I the skill  
Of versifying (which I've not, as stated,)  
I would immortalize both Ann and Lill.

Anna and Lill ! O ! I have many reasons  
For liking them. He who does not revere  
Anna and Lillian "is fit for treasons,  
And stratagems, and spoils"—to quote Shakespeare.

Man is too weak to withstand Beauty's power.  
My heart was whole, and free, and happy till  
I met—O fatal day ! O fatal hour !  
Those sirens of The Club—Anna and Lill.

The next name, and I don't know a sublimer,  
Is Em'ly ; it for sweetness takes the cake.  
[At this juncture I should say that as a rhymers  
I would doubtless be considered a mistake.]

I breathe the name of Minnie now—a good one.  
Christian names my friend Fitzpatrick cannot change :  
And it is better so, for really would one  
Desire that dear name to e'er sound strange ?

I whisper next—not without realizing  
Its beauty and its grace—the name of Lou.  
That I should like this name is not surprising,  
Knowing its fair possessor as I do.

Next Fannie, meaning free, claims my attention :  
No name with more of tenderness is fraught.  
[Perhaps 'twere well to casually mention  
That writing poetry can't be called my forte.]

The name of Helen follows. Ah! without it  
 No galaxy of names would be complete;  
 The pleasant memories that cling about it  
 Endear to me this name so truly sweet.

To me the name has ever seemed symbolic  
 Of chivalry, of beauty, love and joy.  
 Adown the vista of past years historic  
 I gaze and see that Helen fair of Troy.

Now cometh Jeanie: 'tis a name delightsome,  
 And I express it with a thrill of bliss.  
 Were I a poet—which I'm not—I'd write some  
 Most stunning sonnets to a name like this.

Now, heart of mine, whyfore so quickly beatest?  
 Ah! thou hast reason, for I breathe the name  
 Of Mary. Peerless name! three of the sweetest  
 Members in The Club possess this same.

Next—Kate! "Kate of Kate-Hall, my super-dainty  
 Kate." Mamie too, a very worthy mate.  
 O! at life's end, 'mid crashing worlds, I'll faintly  
 Breathe, ere I fall, those loved names—Mame and Kate!

And now comes Alice. Alice! Poets, maybe,  
 Might on this sweetest name in Christendom  
 Do justice if they try; but I, fair lady,  
 Dare not presume on Poesy's harp to thrum.

I must be silent; poets may aspire  
 To reign with gods whilst I creep on earth's plain;  
 I cannot wholly stifle, though, the fire  
 Which smoulders in my heart and soul and brain.

Sometime, fair Alice, those now smouldering embers  
 In my soul may, when I pronounce your name,  
 Too fiercely glow; 'twill shock The Club's fair members,  
 Perhaps, to watch my soul dissolve in flame.

With Rose and Eve\* my list of names is ended.

What other club a nobler list can show?

[Here I'd remark that nature ne'er intended  
Me for a poet, as my friends well know.]

I lack, 'mongst other things, that power of blending  
My burning thoughts in verse. Ye gods! what grand  
And eloquent effusions I'd be sending  
The Club did I the poet's art command.

Then, favored of the Muse, I could be singing  
The praises of The Club in worthy strains:  
Then would I know the rapture felt in winging  
One's flight in Fancy's limitless domains.

Then sweeter songs from my heart would be welling  
Than mortals e'er yet heard: my spirit soon  
Would know an ecstasy beyond all telling:  
My soul from an excess of joy would swoon.

An exaltation in its throes would hold me:  
Aye! and a love, no mythologic god  
E'er understood, would evermore enfold me  
Were I but that which I'll ne'er be—a bard.

No, 'tis not mine, alas! to sing the praises  
Of that dear club. Let happier poets weave  
Its noble deeds into immortal phrases:  
Let others speak those names I dare but breathe.

Let abler pens record for future ages  
The Club's high aims, the conquests it has made,  
Its readings of the poets and the sages,  
Its balls, its pic-nics and its—Lemonade.

\* This may be said to be something of a problem poem. Among the various names appearing in the lines are those of the writer's two sisters; the problem is to find these two names.



[N. B.—NOT COWPER'S.]

I sing the Ringleet. I who lately sang  
The Lily and the Rose, and touched with fear  
The tuneful chords, and with a trembling hand,  
Escaped—but not unscathed—from that rash flight,  
Now seek excitement in another theme;  
The theme is great, and great also and grand  
The occasion—for fair Ann commands the song.  
—Cowper, slightly changed.

Dearest maid,  
To my aid  
I do now call the Muse.  
Bard ne'er had  
Theme more glad  
Than the one I shall choose:

For I'll dwell,  
Annabelle,  
On the power which lies  
In thy small  
Ring, that all  
Who behold it would prize.

From thy hand  
The gold band  
Was received, and I swear  
By the said  
Hand, fair maid,  
Of thy ring to take care.

Yes, I'll cling  
To the ring  
Thou hast kindly loaned me:  
When away  
Its bright ray  
Will recall thoughts of thee.

Of thy ring  
 E'en a king  
 Might justly be vain :  
 As for me,  
 Ann, I see  
 It were much to attain.

While to sing  
 Of thy ring  
 Where'er I may go  
 Will, without  
 Any doubt,  
 Be the best joy I'll know.

At the store  
 As I pore  
 Over musty accounts—  
 As in sad  
 Mood I add  
 Up my ledger amounts,

From my book  
 I shall look  
 [When the "boss" is not near]  
 To delight  
 In the sight  
 Of that ringlet so dear.

On the street,  
 Too, most sweet  
 Will be those thoughts that spring  
 To my mind  
 As I find  
 Time to gaze at the ring.

And also  
 I shall know  
 A joy full and profound  
 In home's dear  
 Atmosphere,  
 Where such peace doth abound :

There—yes, **there**  
 As I wear  
 Thy bright jewel, to me  
 Life will seem  
 As a dream  
 Full of deep ecstasy.

Though I roam  
 Far from home,  
 Though I traverse the sea,  
 Yet thy ring  
 Oft will bring  
 Pleasant mem'ries to me.

Grief or woe  
 I'll not know  
 Whilst the gem I retain,  
 In its bright  
 Rays of light  
 Lurks a charm for all pain.

And despair  
 And dull care  
 That charm will dispel.  
 There is joy,  
 No alloy,  
 In this *ring* from a *belle*.

Dangers all  
 That befall  
 One in life I'll not fear  
 While possessed  
 Of this blessed  
 Golden ring, Anna dear.

Pearls or gold,  
 Wealth untold,  
 All the treasures of earth  
 Are, of course,  
 But as dross  
 To thy ring's precious **worth**.

E'en a star,  
That afar  
Lights the by-ways of space,  
Would in shame  
Hide its flame  
Should thy ring meet its face.

Ah, sweet one,  
Should the sun  
Be destroyed, and no more  
On this sphere  
Cast its clear  
Radiant beams as before,

I would not  
Care a jot,  
No indeed: very soon  
The dark gloom  
I'd illumine  
With the brightness of noon.

What I'd take  
Thus to make  
Good the harm that was done  
Would be thy  
Ring, which I  
Deem more bright than the sun.

Time may fly,  
Days glide by,  
Ages cycle away,  
Death lay low  
All I know,  
Kingdoms fall to decay,

Yet, my friend,  
Naught can tend  
To induce me, I trow,  
E'er to fling  
'Way thy ring  
Which is so treasured now.

There's a spell,  
Annabelle,  
In the jewel, whose power  
Will control  
My rapt soul  
Until life's latest hour.

Yet, indeed,  
There's no need  
To extol that dear loan.  
Who would not  
Treasure what  
On thy finger once shone?

Breathes a man,  
My dear Ann,  
So phlegmatic and cold  
Who, unmoved,  
Could that loved  
Golden object behold?

Does thy hand  
Miss that grand  
Sparkling gem that I hold?  
Art thou much  
Grieved that such  
A rare circlet of gold

Is now mine  
And not thine?  
O! how generous of thee  
Thus to loan  
Me thine own  
Ring. What honor for me!

Should harsh fate  
Separate  
Us in far future days,  
If we two  
Must pursue  
Through this life different ways,

Still to me  
Memory  
Will past pleasures restore:  
'Twill disclose  
To me those  
Days when I thy ring wore.

Thus a balm  
That shall calm  
My wild spirit I'll find  
In those rich  
Pleasures which  
Mem'ry brings to the mind.

But perhaps  
Time's long lapse  
From thy happier mind  
May efface  
Ev'ry trace  
Of such thoughts as this kind.

Yes, dear girl,  
'Mid the whirl  
Of that life thou shalt know,  
Amid the  
Gayety  
Of its pomp and its show,

Scenes of past  
Days shall fast  
From thy mind be removed,  
Nor wilt thou  
Think of how  
Olden friends have once loved.

Nor no dim  
Thoughts of him  
Whom that ring once made glad  
Will thy joy  
E'er destroy—  
Will thy mind e'er make sad.

Ah, around  
Thee'll be found  
Newer friends who may tell  
Tales that will  
Thy mind fill  
With strange thoughts, Annabelle.

And yet through  
All these new  
Scenes that life doth unfold  
Thou may'st yet  
Not forget  
Those warm friendships of old.

O! how few  
Friendships true  
Are in human hearts born:  
Ofttimes I  
With a sigh  
Hear those vows falsely sworn.

Love, too, finds  
In men's minds,  
When serene are the skies,  
An abode,  
But grief's load  
Soon doth sever its ties.

Ah, methinks  
The gold links  
Of a Love's binding chain  
Would outlast  
The worst blast  
That may mark sorrow's reign.

Yet true hearts  
Play their parts  
In life's drama: one reads  
In these late  
Days of great  
Men, and their noble deeds.

Life! Ah me,  
Mystery  
Of unsolved mysteries.  
A frail barque  
In the dark,  
Drifting on unknown seas.

Life, dear friend,  
Soon shall end:  
This probation of ours  
Will before  
Long be o'er:  
Therefore those fleeting hours

Which, dear Ann,  
Make the span  
Of our lives here below,  
We should by  
All means try  
To improve as they go.

We, in fact,  
Should so act  
On this world's transient stage  
As to feel  
O'er us steal  
No regrets in old age.

My poor muse  
Please excuse:  
And yet poor, still the thought  
That my verse  
Might be worse  
Is with happiness fraught.

Yet how can  
Any man  
With a subject so grand  
Hope to do  
Justice? Who  
Could find words at command

That would tell,  
Annabelle,  
In an adequate way,  
What the heart  
Would impart?  
Language cannot portray

All that I  
Feel as my  
Pen this paper glides o'er.  
Ah! what deep  
Longings sleep  
Now within my heart's core.

Still I feel  
As I reel  
Off these lines that 'twere best  
I should keep,  
So to speak,  
A most strict outlook, lest

One shall trace  
On my face  
Something that might reveal  
Feelings that  
I am at  
So much pain to conceal.

Now, though poor,  
I assure  
Thee my rhymes are sincere:  
Yet I send  
Them, kind friend,  
With much trembling and fear.

O! if I  
By and by  
Wealth and power and fame  
Only could  
Gain, it would  
Then be my dearest aim

To outpour  
 My heart's lore  
 In poesy divine:  
 Then, fore'er  
 Free from care,  
 O what joys would be mine?

Then I'd soar  
 Evermore  
 In the realms of the sky,  
 And would string  
 Thy dear ring  
 On the clouds floating by.

And where waves  
 Dash through caves  
 On a storm-beaten shore,  
 And the rocks  
 Quake with shocks  
 From the thunder's loud roar,

I would dwell—  
 Knowing well  
 That forebodings of harm  
 Would depart  
 From my heart  
 Whilst I cling to that charm.

Oft with Love  
 In a grove  
 I'd while the bright hours:  
 Or would play  
 All the day  
 In Flora's fair bowers.

To the lone  
 Northern zone  
 With my "Mizpah" I'd haste:  
 For a change  
 I would range  
 O'er that ice-covered waste.

I would like  
 Much to strike  
 On a fair Eskimo.  
 But a "mash"  
 Might be rash  
 In that region of snow.

Therefore I,  
 Ann, would hie  
 Me to balmier lands:  
 I would dwell  
 For a spell  
 On Sahara's hot sands;

Or, with pride,  
 On the wide  
 Ocean's bosom I'd sail  
 In a shell  
 That no swell  
 Of the awfulest gale

Could upset:  
 For ne'er yet  
 Any talisman was owned  
 Near so sure  
 As this pure  
 Golden band I was loaned.

In his skiff  
 Then "Friend Cliff"  
 On old ocean would sport;  
 And to isles,  
 Distant miles,  
 Would quite often resort.

On the blue  
 Billows—Whew—!  
 My soul would on the brine  
 Throb and beat,  
 Anna sweet,  
 With a rapture divine.



I, afloat  
 In my boat  
 On the wild boundless seas,  
 Would sometimes  
 Sail to climes  
 Afar distant from these.

Yet not long  
 I among  
 Stranger folks would remain:  
 I would yearn  
 To return  
 To fair Anna again.

I would miss  
 The calm bliss  
 Which thy presence doth give:  
 Without thee  
 I would be,  
 Love, unable to live.

So my stanch  
 Craft I'd launch  
 Once again on the main,  
 And ne'er pause  
 Till the shores  
 Of my own land I'd gain.

And each night  
 I would write  
 Of the wonders I'd see,  
 And I'd fail  
 Not to mail  
 My accounts, sweet, to thee.

Then perchance  
 Thou wouldst glance  
 On the poems I'd send,  
 And e'en praise  
 My poor lays,  
 And e'en style me thy friend.

But such bliss  
 I in this  
 "Vale of tears" shall ne'er know:  
 'Twere a dream  
 Too supreme  
 To be realized so.

For, Anna,  
 How can a  
 Poor fellow like me  
 Gain so great  
 An estate?  
 No, it never may be!

Life, alas!  
 I must pass  
 Amid sorrow and gloom,  
 But Death's sting  
 Soon will bring  
 Me the peace of the tomb.

But for thee  
 May joys be.  
 O! may Fate's fingers fair  
 Wreath a bright  
 Crown of light  
 Round thy *ring*-lets of hair.

May thy feet  
 Tread the sweet  
 Paths of Duty and Truth:  
 Then wilt thou,  
 E'er as now,  
 Keep the charms of thy youth.

And at last  
 When life's fast  
 Fading scenes are all o'er,  
 There awaits  
 Through those gates  
 To that bright farther shore

A world of  
 Purest love  
 Whose delights are for thee:  
 Thy life there  
 In that fair  
 Land eternal shall be.

Though aware  
 That thou'lt tear  
 Or consign to the fire  
 These fond rhymes  
 Which at times  
 I have tuned to my lyre,

Still I fain  
 Thou wouldst deign  
 To peruse them before  
 Thou shalt lay  
 Them away  
 On Oblivion's shore.

Yet if these  
 Stanzas please  
 [Though rhyme's not in my line]  
 I, dear Ann,  
 Really can  
 Have no cause to repine.

Au revoir.  
 I'm near o'er  
 With these verse lines so brief:  
 I suppose  
 When I close  
 'Twill afford thee relief.

So I'll bore  
 Thee no more,  
 But will—with thy leave—  
 Only ask  
 That "The Task"  
 Thou wilt kindly receive.

### PLATONIC FRIENDSHIP.

When a friendship termed platonic  
 Turns to love then one may be  
 Sure that Cupid (the sardonic  
 Little rogue) smiles knowingly.

Those philosophers reputed  
 To be so profoundly smart  
 Must perforce defer to Cupid  
 In all matters of the heart.

Thou, O Cupid, through the ages  
 Hast o'erruled our destinies—  
 Those heart theories of the sages  
 Are the merest vagaries.

I like to read about those daring manbirds and their flights;  
The altitude to which they aviate fills me with awe.  
The Harmons, and the Brookins, and the Drexels, and the Wrights,  
In the airy space above us certainly know how to soar.

O! how exhilarating to the body, mind and soul  
It must be to leave the earth awhile, to watch it fade from view,  
While in a magic vehicle, o'er which we have control,  
To mount and dip and speed and drift far off in heaven's blue.

To revel thus among the fleecy clouds far beyond where  
The birds, whose flights we envied once, dare never, never go,  
Is to realize a rapture and an ecstasy more rare  
Than ever yet was dreamt of on the care-filled earth below.

But earth exacts a toll from those who take a skyward trip;  
A life she sometimes calls for from the daring and the brave;  
She asked this of bold Johnstone and he calmly took the dip  
Down, down, into her bosom, where he now rests—in a grave.

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### TO-MORROW.

To-morrow the sunbeams will fall,  
Most likely, on land and on sea;  
But it is not certain at all  
If those beams will fall upon me.

Not certain to fall, I should say,  
On my living form: but these lines  
Are doleful. One ought to be gay  
While on his live clay the sun shines.

*(A Confession.)*

There've been times when I've wanted to  
Know how it felt (I'm frank, you see)  
To be loved by a women who  
Would think the world and all of me.

For me no fair one's heart thus far  
Has with love's kindly ardor glowed.  
Love! Ah, its sweets and triumphs are  
Ne'er to be mine. I'm growing old.

I philosophically, though,  
The situation contemplate.  
All things considered, I have no  
Reason at all to rail at fate.

Love has its cares—is this not true?  
Those cares I have escaped. Ah! had  
I wedded, would I now, look you,  
Be happier or else more sad?

I might have won a heart that would  
Have afterwards grown cold; if so,  
My over-tender nature could  
Hardly have weathered such a blow.

I know how weak are human ties;  
I know how love is apt to fail;  
I know how many, many lies  
Are uttered at the altar rail.

The blasted hopes, the blighted lives,  
The trustful love so often slain,  
The wretched husbands, the sad wives,  
The wrecks astrewn upon the main:

I am aware of these sad things;  
I've grown somewhat irresolute  
Whilst contemplating them. What brings  
Such woes? Is love an evil root?

Should one love less devotedly  
In order to obtain more of  
True peace and joy? Or, say, should we  
Dispense—wholly dispense with love?

The consequences of too great  
A passion startles me somewhat;  
It makes me rather hesitate  
To launch a matrimonial yacht.

I am too timid some may think.  
They who risk nothing, nothing win.  
I dallied too long on the brink  
Of Love's sea; I should have plunged in.

Regrets may cloud my future days.  
I was, as I have found too late,  
Too vacillating in my ways.  
And yet I rail not against fate.

To win a heart that would remain  
Loyal and leal through all of life  
Were bliss indeed. But O! the pain  
Of having an unloving wife.

The latter possibility  
Might have been mine. Doubtless it would.  
And so in my philosophy  
I think things have worked for my good.

I hold, so far as love's concerned,  
That I have acted well my part  
In this life; yes, I feel I've earned  
The peace that bides now in my heart.

The peace that bides! Ah me! some vague  
And faint regrets, I must aver,  
Disturb that peace and seem to plague  
Me sometimes—when I think of *her*.

Farewell, Old Year ; thy end approacheth now ;  
Death soon shall claim thee. There are those who will  
Deplore thy dying—those whose eyes will fill  
With tears when at the midnight hour thou  
Ent'reth thy grave : for thou hast seemed somehow  
Like to a friend ; and we, O friend, until  
Life is no more may in our mind-depths still  
Live thy days over. Memory will endow  
Our lives with her stored wealth : and thus, dear Year,  
Shall we, through all the sorrows that might be,  
Find consolation's balm in memory.  
O ! when our time is come, and death draws near,  
May some kind friend be by to shed a tear,  
Even as we do now, Old Year, for thee.

---

### OUTDOORS.

For poets' odes to spring I care  
But little ; I prefer  
Outdoors, where Nature is, and where  
I may commune with her.

A library ! 'Tis a good thing ;  
I scoff not at men's views.  
But outdoors, on the fields, in spring,  
'Tis pleasanter to muse.

No soul housed on a city street  
Its gladdest song outpours ;  
It sings where life is free and sweet,  
And real ; it sings—outdoors.



A guest whom we have learned to know  
Is from among us soon to go.

Should his loss wring  
Our hearts with grief, while at our gates  
A younger, fairer guest awaits  
A welcoming?

And yet one feels that he could brush  
From straining eyes—no, there's no such  
Thing as a tear.  
A tear? Pshaw! we're too much in love  
With life now at the dawning of  
Another year.

Upon the threshold of a new  
And unknown year we stand. How few  
Of all earth's men  
Will mourn when death takes Nineteen-nine!  
How many, though, will dine and wine  
Young Nineteen-ten!

---

SPRING.

Old Earth as she now whirls through space  
Assumes a new beauty and grace:  
She feels a strange joy  
Taking this maiden coy  
Again in her loving embrace.

And we who inhabit the sphere,  
We who for awhile abide here,  
As the Southland's soft breeze  
Stirs the fresh-leafing trees,  
Find life O, so happy and dear!

Nature is kind, the trees are blossoming  
And man rejoices. Yes, benignant spring  
Has come again; her kindly smile now beams  
Upon the land, and O! her presence seems  
Dearer than e'er before: all things appear  
So beautiful and life is found so dear.  
One's heart this season knows the rapture of  
A new-born ecstasy. Ah, Heaven's love  
These bright, sweet days is shown everywhere:  
The hills are green and fragrant is the air  
With scents of early flowers. Once more earth  
Her loveliest raiment dons, and joy and mirth,  
As caroled by the songbirds in their lays,  
Mark the fleet hours of the gracious days.

---

## A NEW WORLD.

Ere in my life you came  
I found it dull and tame:  
I knew not then the beauty of this earth.  
How great a change is wrought!  
Now, happily, I'm taught  
Life's meaning, its diviner scope and worth.

Love has aroused my mind  
And heart and soul. I find  
The world transformed, and in the bright sunshine  
Life is more fair, more sweet,  
More dear, and more complete  
Than 'twas in days when love's wealth was not mine.

Benignant Nature's brightest smiles  
Are beaming now in these  
Dear days on continents and isles,  
And on earth's sparkling seas.

Spring has returned, and our hearts beat  
With highest hopes as we  
Stand on the threshold of Life's sweet,  
Strange, and deep mystery.

She lavishes her richest gifts  
Again among us here ;  
Our wearied spirits she uplifts.  
Life now is O ! so dear.

From far-off fields where daisies sway  
Now in the balmy breeze  
Sweet scents sometimes so strangely stray  
In our town's boundaries.

Yes, life is sweet in fair Spring's reign,  
And O ! it would be wrong  
For any soul then to refrain  
From bursting forth in song.

The sternest of us may at times  
Unbend. What if we fling  
Our cares away, and jot down rhymes !  
There's some excuse—in spring.

'That day in fair April, which we  
Spent long, long ago by the sea,  
I often recall;  
'Twas dearer than all  
Other days—that midspring day to me.

I love to recall it, I do.  
'The ocean was never more blue  
And sparkling than when  
We looked on it then,  
In the heart of that spring we once knew.

---

## A BROKEN RESOLUTION.

I registered a vow on New Year's day  
To give up rhyming in four months; therefore  
I must, as it is now the first of May,  
Bid farewell to the Muse forevermore.

Yet when birds sing as they are doing now,  
When days are long and one has lots of time,  
When sweet and balmy breezes waft one's brow,  
'Tis hard to check a tendency to rhyme.

However, when the Summer has gone by,  
When Autumn with her rich and ruddy hues  
Bedecks the forests and the fields, ah! I  
Shall then—perhaps—say farewell to the Muse.

But now—no, no. I cannot say farewell  
When lilacs and when roses are in bloom;  
Yet when the golden-rods nod in the dell  
To part from her may fill my soul with gloom.

I'll wait until a few more months elapse.  
I'll bid, albeit in a trembling tone,  
Farewell in winter; yet I might (perhaps)  
Be loath to shiver in the cold—alone.

She loves me ; she can't help it. One might be  
Apt to imagine, unless I explain,  
That these expressions smack of vanity.  
Well, possibly I may be somewhat vain.

But I am positive she loves me, though :  
She says so, and she's truthful as the day.  
Why can't she help it? Well, true love, you know,  
Begets love ; hence my love she must repay.

Yes, darling little three-year old Maybelle  
Surely returns her father's loving ; why  
He—that is, I love more than words can tell  
My precious one—the apple of my eye.

---

## BESIDE THE SEA.

I romped with Maud upon the shore—  
With Maud, who has thus far lived four  
Years in the world ; I've lived three score.  
But this fair morning when  
With that most joyous juvenile,  
Time waived, with an indulgent smile,  
His claim on me, and I the while  
Became a boy again.

Yes, this fair morning I was one  
Of two glad children, O ! what fun  
We both had playing in the sun,  
Now sunk to rest. And Maud  
Rests too, she sleeps : beside the sea  
I walk alone. Ah, rest to me  
Shall come ere long. How suddenly  
Were all my years restored !

A tuneful group they were—those few  
Itinerant musicians who  
    Played in the bright sunshine:  
I paused and listened to the band,  
When suddenly I felt a hand  
    Press gently that of mine.

A small tot of the neighborhood  
Had from his playmates strayed and stood  
    Beside me on the street:  
I clasped the little hand that he  
Extended, and together we  
    Enjoyed the music's treat.

\*        \*        \*        \*        \*        \*

To-night upon the pier, among  
A merry crowd, I sit: a song  
    Is sung, and lo! I see  
A city street, a child demure,  
Whose bright face beams with sweet and pure  
    And trusting smiles on me.

The vision fades. I'm sad. Yet why  
Should I, where revelry runs high  
    As it does here, be not  
Gay like the rest? But no, the song  
Just heard has moved me—made me long  
    To see again that tot.



I walked one well remembered day  
Beside the sea, and saw  
A very little child at play  
Alone upon the shore.

She smiled as, pausing in my walk,  
I greeted her, and we  
Soon were engaged in earnest talk  
There by the mighty sea.

She seemed to like me, and she had  
Much to relate: I sat  
Down by her on the sand, most glad  
To have with her a chat.

\* \* \* \* \*

Dear child, I often think of you.  
Ah yes! though many a year  
Has passed since your words brought into  
My empty life some cheer.

I love the ocean, yet I ne'er  
Found by its waters more  
Of joy than on the day that fair,  
Bright, trusting child I saw.

"Sunbeam of Summer! oh! what is like thee?  
Hope of the wilderness, joy of the sea."

—Mrs. Hemans.

Do you remember, Dorothy,  
Those bright days in July  
When we met by the peaceful sea,  
And played there—you and I?

Those playful hours are, I find,  
A pleasure to recall;  
Although they may from your young mind  
Have faded, one and all.

I very often think about  
The man we formed of sand;  
Before that breaker knocked him out  
He certainly looked grand.

You made his body and his face,  
His arms and legs likewise;  
I shaped his hat and helped to place  
His ears on and his eyes.

And then the "auto", Dorothy,  
That would not quite hold two;  
There was not room enough for me,  
It only seated you.

Our names upon the sand also—  
My! didn't they look fine?  
I've not forgotten yours, although  
You have forgotten mine.

And I think, too, of our store—  
Our little store. I judge  
No other dealers on the shore  
Sold such nice cake and fudge.

Now 'neath bleak winter's sullen skies  
The angry waters swirl  
About that coast, but in your eyes  
Fair summer bides, dear girl.

May you forever, joyous child,  
Find life as sweet and dear  
As were those sunny hours whiled  
Away near the old pier.

\* \* \* \* \*

So I—a lonely man—think of  
That little girl with whom  
I played, and whose smiles, bright with love,  
Dispelled awhile my gloom.

---

## CHILDHOOD.

The days—O the days of childhood!  
How blessèd and happy and good  
They are! Mine were so;  
And yet—yet, I know,  
I would not relive them, if I could.

I like to sit here in this square  
And watch the happy children play;  
I was as free from grief and care,  
Some fifty years ago, as they.

Yet I am not unhappy now.  
Who can be on a day in spring?  
In this sweet air my soul somehow  
Is strangely stirred, and I must sing.

A child speeds with unconscious grace  
On roller skates 'round the flag staff;  
I note her bright and winsome face,  
I hear the music of her laugh.

I notice how her straying curls  
Dance in the sunshine when she shakes  
Her head the whole she gayly whirls  
Around the circle on her skates.

She leaves off skating soon and drops  
Her "rollers" for a piece of chalk,  
With which she draws some squares and hops  
Towards one marked "Home" there on the walk.

Home! That must be a happy one  
She trips to now beside her nurse.  
The afternoon is almost done.  
I—well, I'll stop this rambling verse.

Dear child, fair child, you mind me of  
A little one as dear and fair,  
Who plays—yes, plays somewhere above,  
Not here, not here—now—in this square.

For me to occupy a seat  
Here in this square perhaps is wrong.  
I live just north of Market street,  
And ought to stay where I belong.

Yet may not those who live above  
A certain street come here and sing?  
One's heart must sing of life and love  
When basking in the smiles of Spring.

Beside me sits a little boy,  
In his hands is a fuzzy bear ;  
Both bear and boy seem to enjoy  
The spring-day's outing in the square.

A train of choo-choo cars goes by.  
Where bound? The tot who hauls it knows ;  
Ask him ; 'tis he can tell, not I.  
To Happyland I should suppose.

The tumult now is at its height.  
But is it not a pleasant noise?  
They shriek and shout in pure delight—  
These merry-hearted girls and boys.

They play "hop-Scotch", and tag, and ball ;  
The girls jump ropes ; I hear some cry  
For "salt and pepper", others call  
For "apples", "peaches", and for "pie".

Now a precocious artist takes  
A crayon in his chubby hand,  
And on the asphalt pathway makes  
Some drawings hard to understand.

So who can blame me if on clear,  
Bright afternoons I sit sometimes  
On a bench in this playground here,  
Inditing a few trivial rhymes?

There was a small boy with a gun,  
He wanted some innocent fun;  
A "friend" loaded for him  
That gun to the brim.  
Pa and Ma are now seeking their son.

His young sister one afternoon,  
While flying a purple balloon,  
Was carried away.  
Her nurse thinks she may  
Be blown back to her parents next June.

O say! have you found anywhere  
On the earth, or perhaps in the air,  
Two cute kids? When last seen  
They were playing, I ween,  
With a gun and balloon, in the square.

The boy's elder sister's left eye  
Was cut by a fall; that is why  
She now lies in a swoon.  
But she'll come to real soon,  
Probably by the first of July.

She has had, to be sure, a close call,  
Being very near killed by her fall.  
But she still is alive,  
And perhaps she'll revive.  
She is stunned, merely stunned—that is all.

The fond parents of these three bright  
Little dears, who are now out of sight,  
Seem real worried. The nurse  
Says that things could be worse.  
Does this thought cheer the parents? Not quite.

It's true, there is one little dear  
Whose body, at least, is still here;  
But her senses are fled,  
And her mother, 'tis said,  
Feels almost like shedding a tear.



I am possessed of untold wealth,  
I'm rich beyond all dreams of greed ;  
A wife, two children, strength and health  
Are mine. What more does a man need?

Up-town I have a little home  
Where we four live ; I like to hear  
The children shout " Papa has come ",  
When I at eve my home draw near.

Those little darling ones they watch  
Each evening at the corner of  
The street for me, then we three march  
Towards home and Mother whom we love.

Yes, I indeed have untold wealth :  
A home just large enough for four,  
A wife, two children, strength and health.  
Riches ! No man on earth has more.

---

LIFE'S HOURS.

I danced one day upon the lea—  
Danced, yes, and shouted from sheer joy ;  
I laughed aloud ; I was, ah me,  
At that time just a boy—a boy !

How carelessly I whiled away  
Life's hours once ! I now employ  
Them usefully ; I do not play,  
Nor dance, nor laugh. I'm now no boy.

*(Too panegyrical perhaps, but wholly honest in her spontaneous encomiastic expressions.)*

None seems to think that I,  
In poetry's sphere,  
Will ever rank as high  
As Bill Shakespeare.

But stay!—there's one who tells  
Me oftentimes  
That my verse far excels  
Bill Shakespeare's rhymes.

This critic, aged five years, ,  
Has not a doubt  
My lines surpass Shakespeare's,  
Which I oft spout.

What! tell in rhyme a new  
Story, my dear?  
Well, better this than to  
Murder Shakespeare.

Once, then, upon a time  
A great king had  
A—"Did that king write rhyme  
Like you do, Dad?"

Don't interrupt; wait till  
I'm through, then I  
To all your questions will  
Gladly reply.

And so some fairy tales  
I improvise,  
Which my hearer ne'er fails  
To criticise.

She says now I "beat Bill",  
But I'm inclined  
To think my critic will  
Soon change her mind.

She'll learn the poorness of  
Dad's verse, but will  
Ne'er doubt that he can *love*  
As well as Bill.

Come, Nell, your hand;  
Now let us skip  
Across the sand;  
Look out, don't slip.

O my! what fun!  
Don't budge, be brave;  
Let's stand—run, run!  
Here comes a wave!

How sportive are  
These waves that thus  
Roll up so far  
To play with us.

They laugh, and so  
Do we when they  
Upon us throw  
The sparkling spray.

We like, we do,  
This great big sea;  
And I like you,  
And you like me.

And the sea likes  
Us both to-day;  
At least it strikes  
Me, Nell, that way.

---

CHUMS.

The morning appears most  
Propitious for  
A jaunt along the coast  
Of Jersey's shore.

So hurry, Nell, and get  
Your hat; we ought  
To ride to the Inlet,  
Or else Longport.

Ah! you prefer Young's Pier.  
 I shan't oppose  
 The motion. It is clear  
 What you say goes.

"The Pier"—yes, here we are!  
 Nell knows what's best.  
 Let's walk out to the far  
 End, then—let's rest.

Really, you've chosen well;  
 I like to be  
 Away out here with Nell,  
 And with the sea.

Away out here—out here  
 Above the blue,  
 Deep sea, and 'neath the clear  
 Heavens—with you.

There is no joy more dear—  
 None more profound  
 Than simply sitting here,  
 Looking around.

\* \* \* \* \*

What fun we two chums had  
 That summer we—  
 Nellie and I her Dad—  
 Spent by the sea.

Those daily rambles by  
 The deep with such  
 A merry comrade I  
 Enjoyed so much.

Still on old Jersey's shore  
 Beats the wild sea.  
 I—well, I'm thankful for  
 A memory.

In dreams out on the pier,  
 Over the blue  
 Sea, Nell, and 'neath the clear  
 Skies, I'm with you.

I watched her building by the sea,  
And lent my aid.  
What skill in architecture we  
Toilers displayed !

When in the tunnel 'neath the fort  
We two clasped hands,  
I knew I had a friend long sought  
Found on the sands.

A little friend—one who knew, though,  
Enough of this  
Strange world to have learned love is O !  
Life's greatest bliss.

I who should, doubtless, know more of  
The world than she,  
Had found, alas ! that love—yes, love—  
Was grief to me.

But she—this child—is wiser than  
Am I, therefore  
She may teach me—a lonely man—  
Her brighter lore.

New truths I fain would learn. Time's lapse  
Fresh knowledge brings ;  
And I am not too old, perhaps,  
To learn some things.

So teach me, teach me, little one,  
Here on this shore  
New truths. I would, ere life is done,  
Of love know more.

Sometimes I know an ecstasy  
Unspeakable: a thought  
Sweeps o'er my mind, and O! to me  
A glimpse of heaven is brought.

Night flees before the morning fair  
Now brightening the east;  
And I shall taste the pleasures rare  
Provided at Life's feast.

On earth Love reigns: upon our small  
Round world the sun doth shine:  
Cares disappear, and soon shall all  
Hope's promised joys be mine.

---

## SILENT SPEECH.

Words are so weak, and why  
Employ them now in my  
Revelment of that longing in my breast?  
O! let my eyes convey  
That which no tongue can say,  
And yours, responding, grant my soul's request.

Think not that I shall fail  
To read aright the tale  
Told me by eyes as eloquent as yours;  
In their deep depths I see  
Two lives that are to be  
Blest with a love that through all time endures.



Some day I'll meet my love,  
Unknown as yet. Ah yes!  
Softly Hope tells me of  
A coming happiness.

Now, though the world is drear,  
Not without cause I sing:  
A whisper in the ear  
Prevents my sorrowing.

On Hope's sweet promise I  
Rely; I tread life's way  
Convinced that love in my  
Heart's core will bloom—some day.

---

## AWAITING HER COMING.

There may be in the world somewhere  
A woman—one towards whom my heart  
Shall turn: a woman who will share  
My lot until death do us part.

A woman—can Fate mean it?—who  
Will love me. Love me! Ah! if I  
Do meet her, I shall love her true:  
Yes, love her, love her till I die.

My dearer, sweeter life—my love,  
My truer self I long to see.  
Sometime she'll hear the calling of  
My heart, my heart, and come to me!

## THE EARTH.

Swiftly the Earth revolves in space,  
Unto her goal she speeds ;  
Some day she shall have run her race  
And gained the rest she needs.

Nearer each fleeting moment she,  
Now on her star-lit way,  
Approaches, unaffrighted, the  
Predestined final day.

O! she is brave and she is wise,  
Rushing thus towards her doom,  
Cheerily now while in the skies  
Hope's star doth brightly loom.

---

## A DEATHLESS SONG.

Our earth was greeted by a song  
That morn she took her place  
Amid the stars, to roll along  
Her destined course through space.

Love was the inspiration of  
Those stellar-minstrels then :  
Their deathless song of joyous love  
Now thrills the souls of men.

Should I despair because fate seems  
Unkind? No, why display  
Such weakness when my fondest dreams  
Are to come true some day?

Nay, I shall not lose faith: I'll shed  
No tears: for is not life  
A thing to prize, though clouds o'erhead  
Portend more storms and strife?

One thought—the thought that she shall be  
Restored to me some day  
Cheers me; although from my *heart* she  
Has never strayed away.

---

## FOREORDAINED.

Before the bright stars filled  
The vaulted sky Fate willed  
That we should live and meet and love in this  
Blest golden age: yes, it  
Was in Fate's life-book writ  
That we, dear one, should know love's fullest bliss.

Yes, ere the stars were flung  
In space—ere they had sung  
Their greeting to the earth, Fate, who controls  
Our lives, decreed that we  
Should meet and love and be  
The happiest of all created souls.

## HEAVEN'S GIFT.

Surely of love I ne'er knew aught  
Until this maid I saw ;  
Since that blest day I have been taught  
A truth unknown before.

Never has this world seemed so fair ;  
New and strange joys I know ;  
Along a pathway, strewn with rare  
Primroses, I now go.

Our earth is glorified when Love  
Reigneth thereon. O ! then  
Cherish that gift which heaven above  
Hath vouchsafed unto men.

---

## A WOMAN'S HEART.

There's that which kingly wealth can not  
Obtain—I'm speaking of  
A woman's heart. How blest the lot  
Of him who wins such love !

Gold may secure a woman's hand,  
While Love, in tears, looks on ;  
But hearts yield not to wealth's command ;  
True hearts are not thus won.

Shapely and fair the hand may be  
That itches for man's gold,  
But false to womanhood is she  
Who may be bought and sold.

Love ! 'Tis the holiest sentiment  
Within the human breast :  
It is a gift by Heaven sent—  
The noblest and best.

Summer has come, the season of  
Unbounded joy is here :  
Sweet, idle days when one may love  
And woo a maiden dear.

Now in the lane the blithe birds sing,  
New beauties nature shows ;  
And I may go a-rambling  
Perhaps with—*her*, who knows?

O ! she is kind, as her bright smile  
Right pleasingly attests.  
Can I be else than happy while  
Her smile upon me rests?

---

#### WHERE LOVE BIDES NOT, ANTOINETTE.

Where love bides not O ! ne'er let  
Me sojourn ; life, Antoinette,  
Must in places where is heard no love's glad song  
Be a woeful tragedy.  
It would kill the soul in me  
Were you, Antoinette, and love to leave me long.

He, my Antoinette, who ne'er  
Was entangled in love's snare,  
He whom love denies his favors, he who knows  
Not that rare and soulful bliss  
Which steals o'er one in a kiss  
Taken from alluring lips beneath the rose :

He who unto wisdom's store  
Never added love's sweet lore  
Has lived all his days in vain, for he has not  
Tasted life's best draught as yet.  
Where love bides not, Antoinette,  
O, how bitter and how sad must be one's lot !

Sad and sweet was the song that she  
 Used to sing. Ah! nevermore  
 Shall that song stir the soul in me  
 As when 'twas sung by her of yore.

Now at the play I occupy  
 Near the stage my accustomed seat;  
 Again I hear that song, but my  
 Pulse throbs with no enquickened beat.

Other singers—world famous—may  
 Regale a crowd with song, but I  
 Can ne'er again in my life's day  
 Hear the voice loved in days gone by.



### SOMETIME.

Sometime, love, in a golden clime,  
 Where roses bloom the whole year through,  
 Where skies are of the deepest blue,  
 We'll meet, we two—sometime, sometime.

What joy in that fair clime we'll find!  
 What happiness we two shall share,  
 Our eager spirits mingling there,  
 And your dear form in my arms twined!

How beautiful and how sublime!  
 How wondrous strange and sweet will be  
 Life when we meet and love, as we  
 Will do, dearheart,—sometime, sometime.



"She moves among my visions of the lake."—Tennyson.

Somewhere there is a little lake  
Upon whose surface may be seen  
Sweet lily-bells afloat: they take  
A pride in being there, I ween.

Nestling among the joyous hills,  
Near nature's heart, this calm lake lies.  
Ah, there one hears the whip-poor-wills  
Pour forth their notes when daylight dies.

One time the Spirit of the place,  
Radiantly fair, appeared to me.  
Could I again see her dear face,  
How blest and happy I would be.

---

LOVE.

The greatest and most precious of  
All things in our world is love:  
How cheaply, though, in these  
Too sordid days 'tis held. The stake  
Is gold, not love: and hearts may break  
While storm-tossed on life's seas.

Yet love is love, and love has been  
The world's best wealth wherewith to win  
Joy worthiest to gain.  
One who has loved and whose love met,  
Alas! with no return, has yet  
Not lived this life in vain.

She threw her line into the lake :  
Unnoticed by the angler, I  
Stood near ; the fish seemed not to take  
At all to her, I wondered why.

Now had I been a fish that day  
No time would have been lost before  
A *sole* would have gasped life away  
Prone at her feet there on the shore.

Often do I, O maiden fair,  
Recall how you with hook and line  
Caught not a fish, but, unaware,  
Had captured that fond heart of mine.

---

#### A PREMEDITATED THEFT.

When the stout arms of Morpheus enfold her,  
And she dreams of a fairer world than this,  
The favored guardian angels who behold her,  
Press on her smiling lips full many a kiss.

Angels can do no wrong ; it might, however,  
Be not quite proper for us on this sphere  
To copy all their acts ; we must endeavor  
To be more circumspect—we mortals here.

Yet I shall try, when next I catch her dozing  
Here on the porch, some quiet afternoon,  
To win a pair of gloves ; that is supposing  
I get the chance, which I may—I trust—soon.

Should I one of these days espy  
Under the mistletoe  
Some merry maid, ah! then would I  
A kiss deem apropos.

Now of the season's merriest girls  
North, South, or East or West,  
A certain one with long, dark curls,  
Perhaps I like the best.

O! she's the girl whose lips are so  
Ripe for love's honeyed sips.  
Can I not 'neath the mistletoe  
Have access to those lips?

---

## FAINT HEART.

If it should happen that I find her under  
A sprig of mistletoe on Christmas Day,  
I'll do that which need cause no special wonder:  
That is, I'll—no, I hardly like to say.

Should I discover, though, that combination—  
The girl and mistletoe—I am afraid  
I'd lack the courage in the situation  
To duly and to Yule-ly greet the maid.

Strange (is it not?) our brief existence here.  
Unsolved as yet is life's deep mystery.  
Soon we'll be summoned hence. Yet should we fear  
A visitation we all know must be?

No one can death's impending stroke evade:  
Nearer to all the Reaper draws each day:  
And some of us may in a grave be laid  
Perchance ere many hours pass away.

Ought we not then, while life is ours, be  
Regardful of those duties that are so  
Clear and so urgent? O, if heeded, we  
Hereafter may that life in heaven know.



### AMID THE GLOOM.

If sometimes 'mid the gloom appears  
A fair face, whose rare charm  
I've not forgotten through the years,  
Ah, is there aught of harm  
Re-living for a while in thought  
Those dear, dead days when she—  
My friend—was kind, when her smiles brought  
Such happiness to me?  
Those gracious days! Ah me, it were  
Unwise now to give way  
To grief: yet, should I dream of her,  
Chide not my weakness, pray.

"O, stars that o'er me shine, I pine, I pine, I pine.  
With hopeless fancies hidden in an ever-hungering breast!"  
—Owen Meredith.

Ruth is eighteen and I  
Am forty-five: a sigh  
Escapes me as I sadly meditate  
On this disparity  
In ages, for I see  
Therein the very irony of fate.

If I were younger, or  
If Ruth, whom I adore,  
Were only some years older I'd forsake  
At once my bachelorhood—  
That is if fair Ruth would  
But smile on the proposal I would make.

I've met my love too late,  
And O, my grief is great.  
But were I twenty-one would Ruth's dear eyes  
Beam with love's light on me?  
No, no, it might not be.  
Regrets, vain though they are, will yet arise.

---

#### WHEN TIME IS DEAD.

When ages shall have fled,  
When Time—old Time—is dead,  
And earth on which he stalked has passed away,  
Then, dear one, on some far  
Off happy, glimmering star  
We two shall live forever—and a day.

The day is done, I close my books ; stern duty  
 Calls for no work upon their leaves to-night.  
 I'm free to think awhile of one whose beauty  
 And youthful charms were once my soul's delight.

Night is the proper time for meditation ;  
 Sweet thoughts now come to me, grim business yields  
 To sentiment, and in imagination  
 I join Alicia on Elysian fields.

Alicia ! Ah, in my heart's recesses  
 Still glows the love thy smiles enkindled there  
 In the old days ; that spark divine still blesses  
 My life, and makes the world for me still fair.

Down an enchanted lane in summer weather  
 We stroll again ; we cull again the fair  
 Hedge flowerets, and while we sit together  
 I twine again the wild blooms in thy hair.

Thy face, Alicia, with glad smiles is lighted ;  
 I take thy hand in mine ; 'tis not withdrawn ;  
 I tell my story, and our troth is plighted  
 There in that lane upon a summer morn.

O foolish dreams ! Vain musings ! Unbefitting  
 One in my place. Why in the dull brain of  
 An obscure bookkeeper should there come flitting  
 Thoughts that have aught to do with youth and love ?

Soon shall my day—my life's day—have an ending ;  
 Soon I shall close my books, ne'er to resume  
 The world's work on their leaves ; soon I'll be spending  
 A long vacation in the peaceful tomb.



She sings an olden song, and lo! it bringeth  
More comfort to my heart than e'er before.  
I gain, the while this happy maiden singeth,  
An ampler knowledge of love's wondrous lore.

She sings an olden song. The birds that play in  
The leafy woods are no more tuneful. I  
Know well she sings as sweetly as do they in  
Their gladsome haunts beneath a summer sky.

She sings an olden song, and I acquire  
A larger faith in Hope's fair words. Ah, yes!  
My life, as Hope now hints, may be raised higher  
To an estate whose wealth is—Happiness.

---

### AMID THE CROWD.

Amid the crowd that sauntered by  
Was a fair girl whose features wore  
A lovelier smile than ever I  
Had seen upon a face before.

'Twas but a passing glimpse I had  
Of her, yet in my memory  
She lives; her smile through all the sad  
Years I have known has oft cheered me.

I sing of Alice. Ah! a poet never  
Sang of a girl so radiant and so fair,  
So dainty, sweet and pretty, and so clever,  
So bright, vivacious, and so debonair.

A girl who loves this life, yet loves it rightly:  
She knows that somewhere there's a world more dear:  
And so earth's trials do but touch her lightly,  
For Faith walks with her in the life lived here.

A gentle girl—not weak, for she is daring  
As are all heroines, and this fair sprite  
Is firm as adamant in all things bearing  
On principles of justice, truth and right.

O optimistic, love-compelling Alice!  
Of one thing I am positively sure,  
And that is she will never harbor malice  
If it should happen that my rhymes are poor.

Yet one, I take it, cannot fail completely,  
Inspired by this maid, and if my song  
Be not all that it should, I know she'll sweetly  
O'erlook its faults nor think I have done wrong.

O! 'tis not wrong to dream—to build a palace  
In one's imagination, placing there,  
In full and free possession, charming Alice,  
Sweet tenant of that castle in the air.

When Alice sings a glimpse of far-off places,  
Familiar once and dear in memory,  
I seem to catch: Ah yes! and kindly faces  
From out the past appear again to me.

Yes, when she sings life well is worth the living,  
For then to me its highest joys are brought:  
The sweets of love, the pleasure of forgiving  
Are chief among the things that I am taught.

My soul expands, ambition's fire is lighted  
Once more within my breast. Hope hints of fame,  
And of a love which is to be requited,  
Of wealth, of power, station and a name.

And thus into my life there comes a blessing;  
For when fair Alice sings, Hope turns to me,  
And in a manner tender and caressing  
Speaks glowingly of days that are to be.

If I rely on Hope's fair words and linger  
In a fool's heaven, held there by a song,  
My senses stirred, my heart thrilled by the singer,  
Should I be blamed? Ah, wherefore is the wrong?

My paradise may be somewhat unstable—  
A thing of fancy soon to fade away;  
Yet its delights seem real, and I am able .  
To fully know the meaning they convey.

Poets oft sing in soft  
And impassioned strains of  
Woman, whose charms diffuse  
Among men faith and love.

O! I know one, and so  
Rare her charms are, ah yes!  
Could they be told by me  
Then the world I would bless:

Yea, I'd thrill it, and fill  
It with songs grander than  
Any yet that have swept  
O'er the heartchords of man:

And into the deep blue  
Of earth's dome wondrous strains  
Would ascend till they blend  
With angelic refrains.

But not mine that divine  
Gift possessed by the true  
Bard, whose art wins the heart  
Of the maid he doth woo.

Unexpressed, though, Love's blest  
Song may gladden the mind:  
So alone in mine own  
Breast, unheard by mankind,

Songs of her shall confer  
Richest blessings, and tend  
To uplift shades that drift  
O'er the life's way I wend.

When one has no great thoughts to utter,  
 Loquacity is very wrong ;  
 But bards who write for bread and butter  
 Cannot afford to keep still long.

'Tis not, though, by versification  
 That I my sustenance obtain ;  
 I'd die of lingering starvation  
 If I essayed to write for gain.

I do but dabble, only dabble  
 In verse. I oft flee from the rude  
 World's maddening and vulgar rabble  
 To court the Muse in solitude.

I manage to exist by "clerking" ;  
 This sedentary calling looks  
 Real easy ; still it's no snap working  
 In a close office over books.

However, a precarious living  
 I gain therefrom ; my verse ne'er brought  
 Me a—but I should not be giving  
 These rhymes through which runs no great thought.

Who wants to know of things concerning  
 My puny cares? The world's great cry  
 Is for uplifting, grand and burning  
 Thoughts ; and such thoughts I can't supply !

But if I now am more loquacious  
 Than my thoughts warrant, pray o'erlook  
 My fault ; be patient, kind and gracious ;  
 Do not in anger close this book.

Deal not, O reader, too severely  
 With one who, very timidly,  
 (For love, not gain nor fame) strays merely  
 In the safe shallows of rhyme's sea.

I am, Louise,  
 No poet. Please  
 Remember that: and yet  
 I can't refuse  
 To call the Muse  
 When thou the task dost set.

When Beauty pleads  
 Her slave must needs  
 Do all—dare all to please:  
 And though I fail  
 Perhaps to scale  
 Parnassian heights, Louise,

Yet I shall try,  
 E'en though I die  
 In the attempt. 'Twill be  
 So sweet a thing,  
 So comforting,  
 To know I die—for thee.

But whyfore need  
 I not succeed?  
 My theme ought to inspire  
 The coldest heart  
 To feel a part  
 Of Love's consuming fire.

Yes, even those  
 Who stick to prose,  
 Who never penned a rhyme,  
 Might yet with ease  
 Sing of Louise:  
 The theme is so sublime.

All men, dear Lou,  
 The wide world through  
 Are swayed by love's strange power.  
 O! my fond soul  
 It will control  
 Until life's latest hour.

'Twill ever be  
 A joy to me,  
 The while I journey o'er  
 Life's course, to gaze  
 Back on the days—  
 The dear, dear days of yore.

Soon—soon, O friend,  
 This life will end:  
 The grave, from which we shrink,  
 Beyond doth yawn,  
 And all are borne  
 Each day more near its brink.

What if I know  
 But grief and woe  
 On my road to the tomb,  
 The happy past  
 At times may cast  
 A light to clear the gloom:

As in this bright  
 Refulgent light  
 I walk, life will to me  
 Not seem all vain:  
 No, I shall gain  
 Such joy in memory.



In a far-away clime beneath bright  
Sunny skies, dear, our two spirits might  
Come together somehow ;  
Then shall I breathe love's vow,  
While our lips in love's first kiss unite.

Without love life were incomplete.  
O friend, now unknown, how sweet  
And precious and dear  
Shall this life be here  
That day—that blest day when we meet.

---

## SWEET SUE.

Before I saw sweet Sue  
I never, never knew  
What 'twas to love ; I, now turned forty, thought  
Myself immune, as 'twere :  
But O ! when I saw her—  
Saw Sue—I knew at once that I was caught.

Caught in love's airy net,  
So deftly cast, I yet  
Do not complain ; nay, I rejoice. Sue's smile  
Has made the world somehow  
So wondrous fair. Ah, now  
My life's day dawns and I must sing the while.

She's gloriously beautiful—one who  
"Doth teach the torches to burn bright." Ah, were  
The bard, whose verse I cite, alive and knew  
This peerless girl, what lines he would send her!

Sonnets galore would Avon's poet write  
To her—my love. Again I quote Shakespeare:  
"Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night  
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear."

O, Juliet, my Juliet: more dear  
To me than was Verona's maiden to  
Young Montague. Could I write as Shakespeare  
I'd charm the world by singing, love, of you.

But no, ah! no, sweet Juliet: you are  
More than the world to me: 'tis you alone  
Whom I would charm. Now unto Stratford's star  
I hitch my lumbering cart to reach Love's throne.

---

### THEY WHO LOVE.

Doubtless a comely woman knows  
A joy in capturing men's hearts  
By the employment of her arts,  
Yet, if on no one she bestows

A tribute of affection, she  
Is ignorant of love's best part;  
She knows not what love means, her heart  
Is closed to life's sweet ecstasy.

Why say of those whose love has failed  
Of a requital, that they do  
But love in vain? Ah, they are who  
Have love's sublimest summits scaled.

They stand on love's sun-blazoned heights,  
A vantage gained by sacrifice.  
Who without suff'ring can be wise,  
Or know of life's supreme delights?

---

## ODE TO A BEE.

Fain am I, little worker in  
A flowery world, to glean  
Life's sweets: I strive, like you, to win  
The favor of my queen.

A daring honey-seeker 'round  
Her lips would hover long.  
Nor deem, where such rare sweets abound,  
That stealing were a wrong.

But those exhaustless sweets are for  
No roving humble bee.  
And I have doubts if their rich store  
Is meant for humble me.

However, I shall not despair.  
Nay, blithe and valiant bee,  
A-humming in the perfumed air,  
Your song inspires me.

In the village it is bruited—  
The report is not refuted—  
That Miss Sally's lips are suited  
    For—but no, I won't tell this ;  
Still it's true ; I can't help knowing.  
Have I not with Sal been going ?  
O ! the rapture of bestowing,  
    On such ruby lips a kiss !

No, I do not say I did so,  
Yet that night when Luna hid so  
Thoughtfully her face amid so  
    Beautiful a sylvan scene—  
A broad pasture, on whose clover  
Stood a maiden and her lover,  
The kind moon, that then passed over,  
    Saw—well, no harm done, I ween.

There's another rumor spreading,  
'Tis about a coming wedding,  
One that I need not be dreading,  
    For Miss Sally I shall see  
At the church, participating  
In the blest connubial mating ;  
Sal is—I'll not keep her waiting—  
    Going, yes, to marry me !

That dear night on the moon-lighted  
Clover field our troth was plighted.  
When one's love is found requited  
    Life on earth becomes divine.  
Now I'm all the while a-singing ;  
Time his flight is swiftly winging ;  
Soon the joy bells will be ringing ;  
    Soon sweet Sally will be mine !

A woman's love I never knew :  
That blessing from me is withheld :  
Alone, alone I am compelled  
This world of ours to pass through.

Alone! No, not alone, for I  
Sometimes am conscious she is near :  
I feel her presence. O! how dear  
Those moments are when she is by.

No, not alone, the woman of  
My dreams is fair, and I shall in  
Another world find her and win,  
And hold forevermore her love.

O! I am happy knowing this—  
That sometime my soul will be stirred  
When our lips meet in love's deferred  
First, fondest and divinest kiss.

The loves of this world—are they sure?  
They may, I question not, be sweet.  
But love won in a life so fleet,  
Can it, like mine beyond, endure?

I mind me, not without regrets,  
Of one who loved spring's violets—  
Her favorite flower; she to-day  
Is far away—yes, far away.

I have a flower, one once worn  
By her whose absence I now mourn:  
'Twas worn 'mong her stray curls awhile  
Ere given to me with a smile.

Though perfumeless and faded, yet  
I hoard with care the violet:  
The violet that she once wore—  
She whom I'll see, ah! nevermore;

The gentle girl who, one June day,  
Passed from this life away—away.  
Each spring the flowers, those that gave  
Her pleasure here, bloom on her grave.

If tremulous sometimes should grow  
My speech, and moisture my eyes show,  
Would it denote a weakness? Should  
Grief be unworthy of manhood?



Do you ever think  
Of that time when we  
Watched the great sun sink  
Down into the sea?

O that exquisite  
Summer afternoon!  
From your mind has it  
Passed away so soon?

We talked about love  
In a careless way  
At the closing of  
That fair August day.

By the sea we sat,  
In the bright sunset.  
Our little chat  
You perhaps forget.

I have not somehow  
Quite forgotten all  
We then said; I now  
That day's joys recall.

Your loose auburn hair,  
Flecked with sunset's gold,  
And your smiles so rare  
I again behold.

With you I again,  
By the ocean's side,  
Stroll as we did then  
In the eventide.

Bluer than those skies,  
Deeper than that sea,  
Were your eyes—your eyes  
Beaming then on me!

I forget? Not through  
All eternity;  
No, albeit you  
Have forgotten me.

Yes, I have met her ; that is, long ago

We—well, we knew each other (ah ! those old  
Days she has quite forgotten, tell me, though,  
Who—who has won the heart I found so cold ?

Her heart, you say, is stolen and by one

Who cares not for the spoil. Strange ! Is this true ?  
Pray by what necromancy was it done ?

Who hath thus robbed her ? Tell me, tell me who.

I ? No, ah no. By what means could I wrest

From her that treasure ? Not by pen nor sword :  
In both crafts I'm unskilled. Nay, friend, you jest.  
No rhyme e'er gained one so great a reward.

I cannot lay unto my soul, it seems,

The flattering unction that my muse has brought  
To me the object of my youth's bright dreams,  
The woman whom in vanished days I sought.

Surely, my friend, you do exaggerate.

That verse of mine she chanced to read, although  
Vibrating with a passion strong and great,  
Were not sufficient to win her. Ah, no !

A bit of rhyme per se can never win

A woman, but the intuition of  
A kindred soul may yet discover in  
One's lines the spirit of undying love.

In this respect the vagrant rhyme I sent

Forth on its little trip some time ago  
May have aroused a kindly sentiment  
Within her breast—for me. Would it were so !

This well might be : for she has found perchance

Between those lines the secret I ne'er told—  
The sad, sad sweetness of an old romance  
Methought long buried in oblivion's mould.

A lustrous star, whose light  
On my life fell,  
Now vanishes from sight.  
Sweet star, farewell.

The smiles I basked in for  
A brief, brief spell  
Shall haunt me evermore.  
Bright star, farewell.

This erstwhile happy earth  
On which I dwell  
Now is of little worth.  
Dear star, farewell.

Farewell, farewell: I must  
Not—dare not tell  
All I now feel. I just  
Shall say—Farewell.

---

## PROXIMITY.

Now sings that heart in me,  
For you, love, are so near;  
Your blest proximity  
Inspires song, my dear.

Proximity! I fear  
You think the word is wrong.  
True, you are far from me,  
And yet I sing a song!

O, love, our buoyant souls  
Float lightly o'er the great  
Sea that between us rolls,  
And we communicate.

Fondly our spirits meet  
Above the foamy mist.  
How sweet, love, O! how sweet  
It is thus to keep tryst.

Awake, aye, or asleep,  
Thought, dreams and memory  
Transport across the deep  
Your happy self to me.

---

## BEAUTY.

Beauty has been compared by those  
Who rhyme and who philosophize  
To a frail flower—to a rose  
That soonest fades and soonest dies.

The flowers perish; yes, but they  
Blossom again. O! can true worth  
And love and beauty pass away—  
Away forever from the earth?

I hold that beauty never dies,  
Still I am no philosopher;  
But in a book a pressed rose lies—  
A rose I once received from her.

Though years have passed, that flower gives  
Forth a faint perfume in the room.  
Her life—the beauty of it lives,  
Though o'er her grave fair roses bloom.

Nothing have I to do  
With love, as I can see.  
No woman's likely to  
Adore and worship me.

Yet men are wedded who  
Apparently are no  
More worthy—no more true  
Than I. Is this not so?

We frequently hear of  
Drunken brute beasts who beat  
The wives they swore to love  
Before God's altar seat.

Yet the love of these wives  
For their lords knows no change:  
Through all their wretched lives  
Their hearts are true. How strange!

O the devotion of  
A woman! No one can  
Fathom that wondrous love  
She showers on a man.

Such love—Ah! he who wins  
It while through life he goes  
Should, whate'er be his sins,  
Prize it until life's close.

Were such a love to bless  
My life I feel that I  
Would cherish it, ah yes!  
Until the day I die.

But I have nought to do  
With love, as I can see.  
No woman's likely to  
Adore and worship me.

No mortal ever walked the surface of  
 God's earth who did not hold his mother dear.  
 But why boast of so tender, pure a love?  
 Whyfore exploit it on the highways here?

A shallow love oft makes the welkin ring  
 With noisy vows; a deep and true love drops  
 Unnecessary tooting; 'tis a thing  
 Too sacred to be thundered from house tops.

On "Mothers' Day," so-called, some men will wear  
 Emblems while strolling on the public street;  
 But a true lover of a mother ne'er  
 Will thus proclaim a love so dear and sweet.  
 Written May 8, 1910.

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### SHOW.

One's affection for another—  
 For, especially, a mother—  
 Should not be advertised, I think, upon the avenue.  
 Ostentatiously displaying  
 Loves and griefs (mark what I'm saying)  
 Is that which but the vulgar and most blatant of us do.

Why should I, though, be decrying  
 "Showiness"? There's no denying,  
 We Americans are given to vainglorious display.  
 There's no love too sacred for us  
 To exploit: last Sunday saw us  
 Smirkingly disclosing this trait on the street—'twas "Mothers'  
 Day".



*(A slight tribute of respect to the memory of Thomas Moore.)*

I stand on South Street Bridge ; I gaze into  
The murky Schuylkill with its sluggish flow.  
In the romantic days of long ago  
Old Erin's most melodious poet knew  
And loved this river, then so clear and blue,  
So sparkling in the glorious sunlight, so  
Silvery bright when the full moon would throw  
Her beams upon the playful ripples. True,  
Above these grimy wharves where barges lay,  
Freighted with coal, bricks, lumber, sand and stone,  
The stream glides 'tween green banks, yet I bemoan  
These restless days. I long to break away  
From Traffic's sordid reign. Where Peace holds sway  
There I would love to dwell, to dwell—alone.

---

### THE SEA.

I've always wanted to sing of the sea,  
To pay, in my small way, a tribute to  
Its splendor, charm and power. And yet who  
Am I who dare to clothe in poesy  
The thoughts, regrets and hopes that come to me  
Now as I gaze out on the vast and blue  
Expanse of waters ! Few there are, but few  
That may in thee confide. Ah ! I must be  
Silent, O ! ocean, as I thus stand here  
In thy o'erpowering presence. I find, though,  
A joy in this mute homage : yes ; I know  
An ecstasy as deep, a bliss as dear,  
As Byron found singing of thee on clear  
Moon-lighted nights in Venice, long ago.

Once angels mingled with mankind, 'tis said.

The legend may be based on facts, although

The songs those angels sang when here below  
Were not recorded ; nor doth hist'ry shed  
Light on such things ; yet Love's song is not dead.

There lived on earth three hundred years ago

A heavenly singer, not an angel ; no,  
Merely a player ; one who earned his bread  
By acting on a rude-made stage before

Motley and boisterous crowds. O peerless one !

No angel ever sang as you have done.

Your words, so happily recorded, draw  
The world's heart nearer God's. Ah ! who has more  
Uplifted us than this earth's gifted son ?

---

#### UNKNOWN AS YET.

I love her with my soul's best love, and she

Loves me as surely ; in our hearts there burns

Love's steadfast flame ; her woman's nature yearns  
To mingle with mine own eternally.

O ! I shall seek her when my soul is free

Of earth's imprisoning clay. When dust returns

To dust what truths the quickened spirit learns !

In this brief life on earth I may not be

Successful in my search for her ; but O !

In that far brighter life hereafter I

Shall by Love's guiding signal in the sky  
Sometime learn where she is. Love, I long so  
To meet you in yon heaven. We shall know  
Each other when we meet there by and by.

Just now my mind—as often seems the case—  
 Is barren of all thoughts and all ideas.  
 At this most untoward moment Grace appears;  
 She holds aloft a rose; smiles light her face.  
 “This flower for a sonnet, sir.” I pace  
 Distractedly the room. Alas! Fate jeers  
 At me while with alternate hopes and fears  
 I grope for rhymes—elusive rhymes. Ah! Grace,  
 I sigh despairingly, I, goodness knows,  
 Would wade through gore if thereby that divine  
 Favor could be obtained. I must decline  
 The prize. A sonnet I cannot compose,  
 Not now—but hold! Give me, give me the rose:  
 The sonnet’s written, and the flower’s mine!

---

### A SONNET.

To write a sonnet seems an easy thing;  
 But fourteen lines required—that is all.  
 A little matter like this should appall  
 None who in stately verse would wish to sing  
 Of hoary, rugged winter, gentle spring,  
 Of glowing summer or of fruitful fall.  
 The trouble is indeed in such a small  
 Space to describe the seasons. Who can bring  
 The heart’s expression in the confines of  
 A sonnet’s bounds when love’s the theme! My soul  
 Longs so for her. I would on Heaven’s scroll  
 Write her dear name, so that the saints above  
 And men below might know whom I do love,  
 And envy me while earth whirls towards her goal.

Love everywhere: love in her sparkling eyes  
And on her lips—her red lips whene'er she  
Laughs, smiles, or sings, or speaks. Love on the sea,  
On far-off isles, and in the morning skies.  
Love also in the chilly air that sighs.  
Through the dead branches of each leafless tree.  
Yes, love's an ever present joy to me  
Because of her; it can't be otherwise.  
I know she lives; I know that I again  
Shall see her. I can not be sad. I know  
Nature but sleeps now 'neath her quilt of snow.  
Winter is waning; Spring is near. Ah! when  
The early wild blooms burst forth in the glen  
I may see her whom my heart longs for so.

---

## LOVE'S DAY.

I would that I could worthily reveal  
My love. I would that in a poem I  
Could but present the inner part of my  
Heart to her kindly gaze, so she might feel  
How great my love is, and how true and real.  
But some day—some dear day before I die,  
Some day it may be 'neath a summer sky,  
When flowers are in bloom, and when the peal  
Of happy bells are heard throughout the land,  
She'll realize as ne'er before the might  
Of love—of faithful, patient love. A light  
Will flash into her life: she'll understand;  
And in the dawning of a morn more grand  
We two shall meet: our spirits will unite.

“Midnight, and love, and youth, and Italy!  
Love in the land where love most lovely seems!”  
—Owen Meredith.

In Jersey, not, alas! in Italy,  
My youth was spent; hence it were foolish to  
Muse thus o'er Meredith's sweet summary  
Of life's best joys. Ah! I have known so few.

Besides, I “lag superfluous”, as 'twere,  
Upon life's stage. Youth comes not back again  
With its first love. I often think of her  
Whom I met—not in Italy, but “Spain”.

When my heart and my arms were young and strong,  
And my mind clear, and my eyes keen, and when  
Life was most fair, I met my love among  
The sand hills back of dear old Wee-haw-ken.

Ah! Owen, love is sweet and love is true  
In every clime. Should love less lovely be  
In Wee-haw-ken than it is 'neath the blue  
And starry skies of far off Italy?

Over in Jersey I once whiled away  
Some pleasant hours withal; may I not, then,  
Now, as the shadows close around me, say—  
“Midnight, and love, and youth,” and Wee-haw-ken!

---

#### A LIFE'S HISTORY.

I had a friend, 'twas long ago;  
We parted, each went different ways.  
We were but friends—just friends, you know;  
But yet I miss her—and those days!

Tell me, Pegasus, have I won  
 My spurs? Have I, that is to say,  
 In writing verses ever done  
 Aught to have gained the Poet's Bay?

Possibly not. I am aware  
 I'll never win a poet's crown;  
 And yet, and yet, I do not care;  
 I'm not depressed; I'm not cast down.

A glorious song now thrills my heart:  
 The song is mine—not mine to share  
 With men; I lack the singer's art;  
 But then, but then, need I despair?

Beyond the veil that now is flung  
 'Tween these and brighter days elsewhere,  
 Songs long unuttered may be sung.  
 If silent now, why need one care?

---

#### MY POEMS.

My poems don't deserve to be  
 Collected in a book: a friend  
 Might read a few, but who is he  
 Who will read all the rhymes I've penned?

And yet the act of having dipped  
 In verse was not unwarranted.  
 True, some of my rhymes may be *skipped*;  
 Yet others may, *perhaps*, be read.

Perhaps, ah yes! perhaps some may  
 Give pleasure; a line which offends  
 Need not be read; I want all they  
 Who get my book to be my friends.



I once said that I did not care  
At all for glory, pomp and show.  
I said this with a careless air;  
Said air was an assumed one though.

The fact is (for why not be frank?)  
I yearn to be a potentate.  
I'm fond of pomp; I'd love to rank  
Among the eminent and great.

But I do not suppose I will  
E'er occupy, like Mercury,  
"Upon a heaven-kissing hill,"  
A station. No, that's not for me.

---

## BY THE LAKE.

Into the lake I threw  
The hook I fixed for Sue,  
But to her bait the fish seemed not to take;  
I, easier caught than they,  
Soon fell a willing prey  
To Susan's charms that morning by the lake.

And, afterwards, when I  
Helped Susan scale those high  
And jagged rocks, methought if I should break  
My leg the pain would be  
Far less severe to me  
Than that caused by my heart's wound by the lake.

Then O! the task of love—  
The slow, slow winding of  
Sue's fishing tackle on the wooden stake  
Preparatory to  
Bidding that girl adieu  
Upon the grassy slope there by the lake.

I plucked, ere leaving Sue,  
A modest flower that grew  
Wild on the sunny hill. Did my heart quake  
With awe (perhaps it did)  
Whilst I the flower amid  
Her ringlets placed, that morning by the lake?

The lilies sweet and pure  
I did not touch: I'm sure  
To have "swiped" *them* would have been a mistake.  
I really draw the line  
At a ten-dollar fine.  
O, I was good that morning by the lake.

Yes, I transgressed no laws  
That happy morn, because  
I was, as I have said, too good to take  
A lily; though I would  
Have stolen, if I could,  
A thing more sweet from Sue's lips by the lake.

Not ignorant am I  
Now of love's power. Why  
She, winsome little Sue, has but to shake  
Her curl-crowned head at me  
That I prepared might be  
To die for her, if need were, by the lake.

I trust, however, Sue  
Will bid me live. I do  
Not care to die—just yet. For her sweet sake  
I'd rather live. Ah yes!  
Life has been, I confess,  
So dear to me since that day by the lake.

Till yesterday I verily  
Knew naught of love, but who  
So densely ignorant can be  
On seeing little Sue?

O! fateful yesterday, when I  
In one brief instant grew  
So learned in love—a love taught by  
The smile of little Sue.

Out in the morn of yesterday,  
Beneath its skies so blue,  
Heart-whole and free I went my way,  
Not knowing little Sue.

No special danger did I fear  
When I at noon-time drew  
Anear the lake, so calm and clear,  
Where I met little Sue:

But O! my heart was stolen there.  
And now what shall I do?  
Well, I'll forgive and kiss the fair  
Young robber—little Sue.

Forgiveness is divine, 'tis said:  
And I'm sure I'll not rue  
The act when sealed thus on the red,  
Red lips of little Sue.

Fair summer's reign is o'er,  
The lilies bloom no more:  
In the chill air to-day I saw a flake  
Of snow. The winter drear  
Is drawing now anear;  
I may no more see Susan by the lake.

But dear—most dear to me  
Is now the memory  
Of one rare August morn. Time ne'er can take  
From out my heart the fair  
Sweet image, graven there,  
Of her I learned to love so by the lake.

---

## SUMMER DAYS.

No crowd but goodly company  
Were Grace and Sue and I  
Those idle days, so sweet and free,  
Of a summer gone by.

A summer gone, with Grace and Sue,  
From my dull life. Ah me!  
The sweet, free, idle days I knew  
Are now a memory.

Say, do you ever think of that  
 Fair morn when by the lake we sat,  
     We two, and fished? We caught  
 No fish, but O! I never knew  
 Before that fishing, dearest Sue,  
     Was such delightful sport.

In the fresh flower-perfumed air  
 The happy summer birds sang their  
     Choice songs, as though they wished  
 To voice the joy all felt: most great  
 Was mine found in that tete-a-tete  
     With you what time we fished.

Your hat was cast aside, and through  
 Your free dark hair the soft breeze blew,  
     Your curls it rumbled so.  
 How perfect was that morning! We  
 Sat underneath an old elm tree  
     And—well, we fished you know.

Unnoticed on the ripples danced  
 My pretty float. Your smiles entranced  
     Me quite. In the depths of  
 Your clear brown eyes, more than in the  
 Clear lakelet's depths, I gazed. Ah me,  
     How strange a thing is love!

Aye! strange, and dangerous, and sweet.  
 I recked not, sitting at your feet  
     That peaceful morn, of what  
 Might be. Now I, afar from you,  
 Am suffering from the wound, dear Sue,  
     My heart that morning got.

The charmingest of girls,  
She of the raven curls,  
Has robbed me of my peace; I cannot do  
My work, nor sleep, nor eat.  
And yet life seems so sweet—  
So strangely sweet these days because of Sue.

She is from top to toe  
(If I may put it so)  
Of such surpassing loveliness that few  
On seeing her could be  
Unmoved; so don't blame me  
For loving—aye, adoring little Sue.

Oh, her bright eyes! Perchance  
It was their roguish glance  
That first so startled my rapt soul; and now  
Deep in her wavy hair,  
Like that bow she wears there,  
I find my heart is tangled fast somehow.

The strictest anchorite  
Would worship her on sight.  
Her joyous laugh, her songs, her gentle voice,  
Her comeliness, her grace,  
Her smiles, her radiant face,  
Would teach all men to love and to rejoice.

It is not strange therefore,  
While o'er my books I pore,  
That towards this girl my thoughts should sometimes stray.  
How blest my life would be  
If Fate were kind to me,  
And grant me my heart's dearest wish some day!



Now in my quiet room,  
Amid the evening gloom,  
I sit alone, thinking of peerless Sue.  
I would that she were here  
So I could hold her dear  
Small hand, and press thereon a kiss or two.

Yes, two or three—or more:  
Well, let me say a score.  
And on her glowing mouth, too, I would fain  
Bestow just one light kiss—  
But no, ah no, such bliss  
I upon earth, alas! can never gain.

Joys I must now forego  
I may hereafter know.  
Yes, in the sky when we as angels greet  
Each other, she may be  
Kindlier then to me,  
And 'mong the silent stars our lips will meet.

And O! with what delight  
We two will wing our flight  
Through stellar space: and as I gaze into  
Sue's love-responding eyes  
I'll find in paradise  
A joy methinks that will be known to few.

But no: not here nor in  
That world beyond I'll win  
The favor either of the girl or of  
The beauteous saint. It were  
Idle to dream of her,  
And of the stars, of kisses there—and love.

Some day—ah yes, some day  
I fear Susanna may  
Pass from my life: the parting of the ways  
Will come. 'Tis Fate's decree.  
But oft in dreams I'll see  
The joyous spirit of these fleeting days.

---

## A FALL.

To my late fall let me revert ;  
The injury I then sustained  
Seems serious ; my heart was hurt,  
Its mitral valve may have been strained.

I shall endeavor to relate  
How 'twas I fell, but yet I fear  
That in my now delirious state  
I may not make myself quite clear.

I—O ! but it is hard to tell  
About a fall the results of  
Which may prove fatal: I—er—fell  
Into—yes, I fell into love.

*On receiving from her the gift of a tea-cup.*

I have a treasure—one most rich :  
It is the little cup from which  
Sweet Nellie used to drink.  
I press my lips against its rim,  
And somehow now my eyes grow dim  
The while of her I think.

For she, the friend we all held dear,  
Is far away : her season here  
So quickly passed, and I  
Now miss the working-days that were  
Made joyous by those smiles from her.  
For those lost days I sigh.

Ah ! if in earlier years I had  
Met one so sweet—but no, these sad  
Regrets should not spring up.  
Life has of late seemed fair. Ah, yes !  
I know its worth the while I press  
My lips to Nellie's cup.

---

FRIENDS.

Earth's beauty and its loveliness  
Are due to love ; on love depends  
Man's joy ; blest are they who possess  
The pleasing art of making friends.

I miss one loving friend I had  
Once when I trod those happier ways.  
I'm lonely now—lonely and sad,  
As I recall life's yesterdays.

She sang: I was not there to hear;  
But she sang well, so I am told:  
She filled the seed house full of cheer,  
And—I was left out in the cold!

Alone, that eve, I left the store;  
I supped at Doolittle's café,  
While Alice, in her repertoire  
Of songs, o'er happier hearts held sway.

I thought of her while I did eat;  
At times I sighed, I scarce knew why.  
An egg, two rolls, some soused pigs' feet  
I had, also a piece of pie.

When I my meal had finished I  
Strolled down the quiet street: I knew  
Not of the feast of song near by,  
More rare than that I got from "Doo".

She sang. O! wondrous is the art  
Of a true singer, whose songs may  
Cause the dead chords of one's sad heart  
To thrill as on a by-gone day.

She sang. The charm and magic of  
Her fresh young voice made all cares flee,  
And in their stead joy, peace and love  
Reigned for the time triumphantly.

There is not too much joy in this  
Work-a-day world, hence 'mong life's things  
That one cannot afford to miss  
Are those songs that fair Alice sings.

I wandered towards the Delaware:  
I gazed across at Jersey's shore,  
And when the shadows deepened there,  
Methought 'twas time to seek the store.

I hurried back: upon the stairs  
I learned that our songbird had  
Regaled her friends with various airs.  
O! then it was that I felt sad.

Yes, then I knew grief's bitterest pang:  
I stagger now beneath the shock:  
For Alice—our Alice— sang  
While I was lounging on the dock.

Ah me! perhaps the sweetest song  
That e'er was sung I failed to hear.  
I cannot, though it may be wrong,  
Help shedding now a silent tear.

Would she have sung had I been there—  
This blithe and tuneful Loganite.  
I know not: still I shan't despair:  
I'll stay in-doors another night.

And yet the years, as they pass by,  
May ne'er another song-night bring.  
'Tis sad indeed to think that I  
May never hear sweet Alice sing:

Sweet Alice of these later days,  
(As sweet as Ben Bolt's friend of yore),  
Whose smiles and songs and pleasant ways  
Have won all hearts here in the store.

I have been told  
That I am old,  
Which is quite true, yet I make bold  
    To say, in brief,  
I find life dear.  
This is not queer,  
For I am not yet in the sere  
    And yellow leaf.

A young girl's smile  
Can yet beguile  
My fancy for a little while  
    Here among seeds:  
For heart and mind,  
I haply find,  
Are still susceptible to kind  
    And gracious deeds.

I try to act  
With proper tact  
Despite my age—this is a fact.  
    And 'tis no crime  
For me to feel  
An interest real  
In some one's welfare, and reveal  
    The same in rhyme.

And so I send  
These lines I've penned  
To my—yes, let me call her friend;  
    For she, look you,  
Has friendly been  
To *all* within  
The store, and why may I not win  
    Her friendship too?



I'm told that I should put my whole  
 Heart, and my soul as well, into  
 My work; but ah! both heart and soul  
 Belong, I might say, Mame, to you.

To be successful they say I  
 Must throw all of myself into  
 Trade's greedy maw; but O! Mame, my  
 Heart—if not soul—belongs to you.

So if I'm not successful, Mame,  
 In my attempt to get into  
 The firm, who is the one to blame?  
 My heart, please note, belongs to you.

---

### THE STIMULUS OF LOVE.

If thus far I've not managed to  
 Win much success in life's stern game,  
 My failure really is not due  
 To my affection for fair Mame.

Love is no drag; it urges me  
 On in the race. Ah! my heart needs  
 Love's stimulant. I yet shall be  
 A partner in this House of Seeds.

O! I'll make good. Just watch me climb  
 Up Fortune's ladder. Wealth and fame  
 Are bound to come my way—in time.  
 I cannot fail, for I love Mame!

---

### PAST DREAMS RECALLED.

*This is a very recent production, having been written nearly two decades after the two preceding poems, of which it is a sequel.*

There could be no fulfillment of  
 Such glorious dreams. Why, then, repine?  
 I dreamt of wealth, fame, power, love.  
 How foolish were those dreams of mine!

I am not yet a member of  
 The firm. I have no wealth; my name  
 Appears not in Fame's Hall. E'en love  
 Has passed me by—I've not won "Mame"!

'Tis six o'clock and the day's work is ended :

I hie me home : I dine : now heaven's bright  
Stars shine : night on the city hath descended.

To Alice—yes, to Alice I shall write.

She once said she liked poetry, consequently

I may be pardoned if for this dear maid  
I try to rhyme. Come, Muse, deal with me gently :  
It is for Alice I now seek thy aid.

I must confess, though, that I'm not a poet.

I may, as might be thought, possess the art  
Of stringing rhymes : yet any one can go it  
Like this for her whose charms win every heart.

Our Alice is, although she may not know it,

A poetess herself : one clearly sees  
That this is so : her thoughtful face doth show it.  
Ah, she need write no careless rhymes like these.

Her's is a larger art—the art of making

Less gifted ones, on whose heartstrings she plays,  
Perform the poet's task : an undertaking  
That now an humble bookkeeper essays.

And yet it is as easy as is rolling

Off of a highly-polished log to write  
In verse when she's the theme ; there's no controlling  
My Pegasus then in his maddening flight.

But I must curb my ardor. O ! I dare not

Tell her my heart's fond secret or reveal  
My deepest thoughts ; this fair young girl would care **not**  
To have me tell all—*all* that I now feel.

O what a girl she is! A stoic's heart could  
Not withstand her charms; nor can time heal  
A wound as deep as that which Cupid's dart would  
Cause the veriest anchorite to feel.

Small wonder then that we who so well know her  
Should have this season here learned something of  
That master passion; yet we dare not show her  
The depth of our overpowering love.

Our adoration, although based on reason,  
(For who can help adoring one so dear?)  
Must not be told. The Belle of this fair season  
Moves in a grander world than our small sphere

Yet while she's here—while, in a sense, she's ours  
We should be happy. Happy? Yes, for we  
Need never let the sunshine of these hours  
Be darkened by that parting soon to be.

Ah! I for one in present joys shall revel:  
I'll live not in the future nor the past,  
But now, yes, now; my head I claim is level,  
No coming grief this hour's joy can blast.

Ah Alice! blithesome as the birds that wing their  
Flight in balmy springtime. I know well  
She is as happy as are they who sing their  
Carols in fair nature's wooded dell.

She is so frank a girl; though realizing  
Her more than ordinary gifts, she's free  
From all conceit: hence it is not surprising  
That we esteem a girl as true as she.

A girl of humor. Humor is the rarest  
Gift found 'mong women so 'tis said. Our queen  
Has, I know well, the saving grace. Earth's fairest  
Girl has a wit as kindly as 'tis keen.

A girl whose heart, although it is so youthful,  
Has yet been tried and found as true as steel.  
In her (and O! doubt not my being truthful)  
I have discovered my long sought ideal.

A smart girl too, who won't be caught a-napping.  
Not she. O! that siesta which one day  
She promised to—no, I may get a rapping  
Were I to give our "Sleeping (?) Beaute" away.

But if that unsophisticated keeper  
Of books felt sore because of having been  
Jollied by our somnambulistic sleeper,  
Should he protest for being taken in?

No, no indeed; nor is it my intention  
To speak of that which our girl perhaps  
Has now forgotten. Pray excuse its mention.  
Hereafter I shall not allude to "naps".

Yet if at any time I find her cradled  
In Morpheus' strong arms, I shall—mark this—  
Avenge myself. I trust I'll be enabled  
Soon to do so by means of—yes, a kiss.

Those smiles of hers! How well I know their power.  
(She smiles as does no other girl in town)  
She can, though, look most sternly; one sad hour  
I languished in the shadow of her frown.

Yes, this fair girl can frown; but then not often  
Frowns rob her lips of their more kindly grace.  
I like her better when her features soften.  
Smiles so enhance the beauty of her face.

I like her best of all when she is kindly.  
There is a sweetness even in her frown;  
And I'm disposed to like this maiden blindly,  
But I don't like to be by her "turned down":—

That is, without a cause ; and those who treasure  
That girl's good will would not in devious ways  
Do ought to bring a shadow of displeasure  
On her face wreathed with sunny smiles these days.

Now I would not resort to an evasion,  
My duty's clear ; I shall be frank and say  
That if on the alluded-to occasion  
I drove the smiles from her dear face away :

Causing where smiles had been a frown to settle,  
My act was harmless and was really done  
In jestful mood ; yet by this girl of mettle  
I was " turned down " for my untimely fun.

The penalty for that past act of sinning,  
Although excessive, yet was fully paid.  
I trust that nevermore those smiles so winning  
By act of mine will from her countenance fade.

O ! our Alice, in my estimation,  
Is the best girl upon this favored sphere ;  
There probably ( I speak with moderation )  
Never existed any one as dear.

A girl of principle and of ambition,  
Of high ideals ; few are possessed of those  
Rich gifts with which she is endowed. Her mission  
In life is to spread joy where'er she goes.

She heeds the call of conscience ; yes, she hearkens  
To that low voice, and blithely on her way  
Through life she goes. No shadow ever darkens  
The sunshine of love's most benignant sway.

Yes, all is well ; and I do hope 'twill be so  
Until the close of her life's little day—  
Until there comes that final summons we so  
Long for at times, and she is called away.



I've noted, not without profound emotion,  
The strength of that religious sentiment  
Which prompted her to spiritual devotion  
At noon-time on those solemn days of Lent.

And so I say if saints live in these latter  
Days, I know one excelling in good deeds.  
I won't say who. Ah well, it doesn't matter:  
Best not to tell, though, in a "House of Seeds"

Perfection's none too strong a word to utter  
When speaking of our peerless little queen.  
Ah me, how queerly now my heart doth flutter!  
And O, my reeling brain! What does it mean?

Are those strange joys that have at times delighted  
My soul in rapturous dreams about to be  
All realized? Shall my love be requited?  
Is heaven to open now her gates for me?

No, no; not mine, not mine. Ah! never, never  
Shall peerless Alice shower on me her  
Wealth of affection. To live I'll endeavor  
Without the bliss that her love would confer.

We can but worship, not possess the flower  
That blossoms in our midst a little while;  
'Twill ere long brighten other fields, and our  
Lives shall no more be gladdened by her smile.

But O! when in her presence others tremble,  
As oft I've done, with love's strange ecstasy:  
When other friends in happier days assemble  
Around her, will—will she think then of me?



Will she think then of the poor old bookkeeper  
 Whose heart is crushed, and who, with blinding tears,  
 Now writes these lines? Ah me! my soul shall seek her  
 O'er lands and seas through all life's mystic years.

\* \* \* \* \*

The night is spent: a newer morn advances  
 Upon the grim old town: I must to bed.  
 Farewell to all these dreamy fond romances.  
 Why should they fill an old bookkeeper's head?

Yet if my body to a desk is fettered,  
 My soul beyond the confines of a store  
 Is free to fly; if that soul thus is bettered,  
 Pray let it in fair heaven's azure soar.

But I must close. The thoughts that now are flitting  
 Through my fagged brain can not be all expressed.  
 Here at my desk I have too long been sitting.  
 I'm weary,—weary. I should seek my rest.

I must prepare for bed; that countenance beaming  
 With happy smiles in dreams will come to me.  
 I'll leave off writing now and take to dreaming;  
 Adieu, dear girl,—in dreams thy face I'll see.

—

### JOY.

No sadness for me, my dear boy.  
 By grieving we only destroy  
 Life's chances for bliss.  
 I'm hunting in this  
 World for joy—not for gloom, but for joy.

“We pass and speak one another,  
Only a look and a voice, then darkness again and a silence.”  
—Longfellow.

Might I not sometime meet on life's pathway  
A fellow traveller whom I shall find  
Extremely charming? Yes, perhaps I may.  
Should this fair traveller's smile, so true and kind,  
Illume my life and bring to it a bliss  
Exceeding all past joys, would it be wrong  
And an unpardonable act to kiss  
Lips for whose sweets my ardent soul might long?  
Lips luscious as a pair I know would lure  
Even the sternest stoic. Ah! I'm sure  
No harm there is in kissing lips so pure.

---

#### IF IN THE DAYS TO COME.

May every blessing light, dear girl, on thee  
And mayest thou ne'er know a single care.  
Each friend of thine I trust may ever be  
Sincere as now: life then shall seem most fair.  
If in the happy days to come shouldst thou  
E'er think of those who have found thee so dear,  
A thought O! kindly give the one who now  
Loves thee as all do who have met thee here.  
Let me hope that thou wilt remember me:  
Encouraged by this hope, I know I'll be  
Not quite so sad when I am far from thee.

My ideal I have found—yes, 'mid the whirl  
And flurry of a busy day I saw  
Earth's loveliest and best and dearest girl:  
She smiled upon me in a crowded store.  
I recognize in her the vision of  
Entrancing day-dreams I at times have had:  
And in my overburdened heart a love,  
Lost for a while, returns, and O! how glad  
Life seems. Again youth's joys are mine as I,  
Enraptured, gaze on her who into my  
Now love-enlightened life steals silently.

---

#### A DARK-HAIRED DIVINITY.

My thoughts throughout the day and dreams at night  
Are of the dark-haired beauty in that store.  
Earth ne'er was trodden by a fairer sprite:  
She is the queen I worship and adore.  
I am no longer free: my heart is now  
Enmeshed, as 'twere, in her luxuriant hair.  
And O! my very life is hers somehow:  
Love such as mine oft drives one to despair.  
Let me, however, try love's fire to quell  
Ere it consumes me quite. And so farewell  
Now to the girl whose name *I dare not tell*.

March goeth out with lamblike calmness, while  
April—capricious April—graciously  
Enters upon the scene. A sunny smile  
She has for everyone: and O! as we  
Inhale the scent of flowers borne from fair  
Elysian fields where happiness and love  
And peace abound, a joy most sweet and rare,  
Like unto that bliss found in heaven above,  
Lightens our hearts. April through all her tears  
Encheeringly will smile. Hope in our ears  
Now whisperingly hints of happy years.

---

## MAY DAY.

May has arrived: come, let us seek our Queen  
And crown her with fair flowers: let us, too,  
Erect a May-pole on the Village Green.  
Should we not dance 'neath skies so clear and blue?  
I read a message in the flowers of  
Ethereal spring that glorifies my life.  
Again hope tells me I shall meet my love,  
Looked for so long through years of toil and strife.  
Let us with song greet jocund spring, and may  
Each one join in the dance. O! 'tis a day  
Never to pass from memory away.

Methinks if I possessed—well, say about  
A million dollars (which amount would be  
Enough for all my needs) that I'd skip out  
Soon from the store: for O! the place to me  
Is dismal now. Yes, since Danbury's Pride  
Evanished from our midst life once so fair  
And bright with hope has changed, and I have sighed  
Like one crushed by a grief too great to bear.  
Let me, then, have a million dollars. Gee!  
Each plunk I'd spend searching for her. Ah me!  
Now lost to sight but not to memory.

---

## BY THE BALUSTRADE.

Search where I may I know my quest shall be  
Useless so far as finding any maid  
So sweet as is the little one I see  
At work each morning by the balustrade.  
No eyes there are so bright as hers: when I  
Peer in their depths I find love biding there.  
Had I my youth restored to me I'd try  
Right valiantly to win this maiden fair.  
Alas! my youth has passed: and yet whyfore  
Need I repine? Life still on me confers  
Enough of joy. Am I not at the store  
Rewarded daily by those smiles of hers?

"Music hath charms," so it is said.  
 I know it well; my soul recalls  
 Strains which this now mute harp once shed  
 So joyously through these cold halls.  
 Long years have passed since her hands strayed  
 O'er these chords now so sadly still.  
 The dear old melodies she played!  
 They haunt me yet and ever will.  
 I oft at midnight hour these  
 Echoing corridors traverse;  
 Bats, swooping from the musty eaves,  
 Round me their weirdsome flights rehearse.  
 I think of those dead days that were  
 So bright, so happy. I seem to  
 Catch 'mid the gloom a glimpse of her—  
 Of her I ever found most true:  
 Earth's only woman I found true.

---

 L'ENVOI.

The last line reminds one of Poe.  
 Do you not think so, Miss Briscoe?  
 Perhaps Poe's wraith at my elbow  
 Stood when I wrote it, Miss Briscoe.  
 It's easy—quite a cinch, you know—  
 To write acrostics, Miss Briscoe.  
 Easy, that is, when helped by so  
 Po(e)tent a spirit, Miss Briscoe.  
 Sometimes I wish, though, your cog-no-  
 Men had less letters, Miss Briscoe.  
 But tell me, is it comme il faut  
 To write in this way, Miss Briscoe?  
 Did you say "cut it out?" Yes? No?  
 Be more perspicuous, Miss Briscoe.



My rhyming verses never brought  
Imperishable fame to me;  
Still I regret not that I sought  
Sometimes the Muse of Poesy.  
Lured by Love's smiles, I tried to scale  
Olympic heights. O! how I tried!  
There was, Hope said, no word like fail;  
Though now I think Hope must have lied.  
I still, however, onward press—  
Ever, yes, ever onward. I  
Believe that I shall win success,  
Riches, and love before I die.  
I still build airy castles whose  
Sky-scraping battlements command  
Charming and most entrancing views  
Of a fair sea and a fair land:  
Entrancingly fair sea and land.

---

THE OCEAN.

Mighty in its wild wrath, the sea  
Is just as mighty when its soul  
Seemingly sleeps: the waves in glee  
So gently then on these shores roll.  
Let me live in the hearing of  
Old ocean's breaking waves; to me  
The sound is dear, for O! I love  
The restless sea's sad symphony.  
It breathes of hope, and though I roam  
Earth's surface o'er, Hope's fair tale may,  
By heaven's wind across the foam,  
Reach me and brighten my life's way.  
I love thee, Ocean; life would seem  
So sweet could I alway live here  
Close by thy side, and dream, and dream  
Of some one who is fair and dear:  
Exceeding fair, ah yes!—and dear.

## LASTING LOVE.

Many a man believes he is  
In love because a woman's smile  
Stirs his cold heart and quickens his  
Slow-beating pulse a little while.  
Let my love have the depth and might  
Of the illimitable sea—  
The love which abides day and night  
Through all time and eternity.  
I know I shall love thus when I  
Encounter her. Fate sometime may  
Be kind; yes, we shall meet and my  
Rejoicing heart will love for aye.  
I know her lips will, with an art  
Sweeter than spoken words can be,  
Confess that the love of her heart  
Of hearts is mine—that she loves me:  
Ever, yes, ever will love me.

---

## CHRISTMAS DAY.

May Love's blest song be sung to-day  
In every home on this fair earth.  
So subtly sweet seems song's strange sway—  
Song such as that heard at Love's birth.  
Let every one partake with zest  
Of this most gracious season's cheer.  
This Christmas Day! Ah! 'tis the best  
That ever dawned upon our sphere.  
It is indeed a good time when  
Earth's weary ones learn something of  
Bright joys, and in which sad-eyed men  
Reclasp to their hearts a lost love.  
It gladdens this life to learn such  
Sweet truths; and O! what joy 'tis to  
Convey to those we love so much  
Our Christmas wishes as we do:  
Each heartfelt wish, as we now do.

Merely a player on life's stage  
 Is every man and woman. True!  
 Shakespeare, the poet and the sage,  
 Says so, and he most surely knew.  
 Life is indeed a mystery:  
 "Our little life" that's rounded by  
 The long, long sleep which is to be  
 Taken by all, for all must die.  
 It is not well, however, to  
 Expatriate on mournful things.  
 Be cheerful; he is wisest who  
 Rejoices, dances, laughs and sings.  
 I don't believe that it is a  
 Sin to assume a cheerful air.  
 Can worrying help matters? Nay.  
 O! why need any one despair?  
 Earth's fair, life's good; why, then, despair?

---

TO THOSE WHO WAIT.

'Mid the world's storms and sordid strife,  
 Its cares and trials, Hope's bright smile  
 Still brings us cheer; there's joy in life;  
 So let's be patient for a while.  
 Lest we forget, 'twere well to write  
 On the mind's tablets that we may  
 True joy obtain by acting right;  
 There surely is no better way.  
 In time love's dream, that brings into  
 Each lover's heart such rapture, will  
 Be realized. Youth's dreams! Ah, who  
 Recalls them not? They haunt us still.  
 If we but wait, life's every prize  
 Shall, so Hope says, be ours at last.  
 Can we not wait? Who says Hope lies?  
 Our faith will outlive doubt's rude blast.  
 Earth's hope-filled sons fear not doubt's blast.

*The result, probably, of too much out and in going between the acts.*

Methought I met Pierrock R. Fell  
 In Boothby's 'tween the acts last night ;  
 Said he—" I like your verses well ;  
 Such poetry fills me with delight.  
 Let me " (and here a check he drew)  
 " Out of sheer admiration for  
 Those tuneful traits of yours hand you  
 This check it has pleased me to draw."  
 It—the check—was made out for just  
 Eight hundred thousand dollars. O !  
 But I'll blow it all in, I must  
 Right off, ye gods ! on Miss—er—no.  
 I should not mention here her name,  
 She might not like it ; but the " dough "  
 Cert'ly I'll blow in just the same  
 On her—that is, on Miss Bris—no—  
 Er—no. What ! tell her name ? O no !

---

#### THE GIRLS.

Most men, methinks, mistakingly,  
 Imagine every girl a saint ;  
 Some girls may be so, still I see  
 Sometimes, not often, one who aint.  
 Like us, the girls are human ; so  
 Of course some faults they may possess ;  
 This doesn't seem to matter though :  
 The men adore them none the less.  
 It's just as well that women are  
 Earthly as we, else they would be  
 Beyond our reach, like a fair star  
 Rolling along an azure sea.  
 If girls sin—ah well, what of it ?  
 Surely such sinners' sins, so small,  
 Chivalric men mind not a bit.  
 Our girls ! we love them—faults and all.  
 Earth's angels sin ? No, not at all.

Many believe acrostics are  
Immensely hard to write—and read.  
Still difficulties do not bar  
Some souls from striving to succeed.  
Let an absorbing passion sway  
One's soul, for instance ; then in all  
The world no tasks are found today  
That can this love-swayed soul appall.  
It would, I have no doubt, be more  
Easy to navigate the air,  
Brave arctic perils, or explore  
Regions remote, and perish there—  
It would be easier, I say,  
Such things to do than writing these  
Confounded lines, but 'neath the sway  
Of Love we can't do as we please :  
Earth's creatures can't do as they please.

---

## DREAM KNOWLEDGE.

My plummet line I shall not throw  
Into love's sea. Ah ! who can sound  
Such depths ? Love's meaning, in dreams though,  
Sometimes methought that I have found.  
Love is a mystery, it seems :  
One which no mortal understands,  
Though I have held (that is, in dreams)  
The key to it within my hands.  
In dreams (just dreams) I've clasped a maid  
Enthusiastically. What !  
Breathe here her name ? I am afraid.  
Really, I think I better not.  
It seemed (in dreams) right to caress  
So rare a maid ; but dreams oft go  
Contrariwise : hence she, ah yes !  
On me caresses may bestow :  
Effusively, mayhap, bestow.

*These lines, composed after witnessing the theosophic play of  
"My Friend from India," are respectfully dedicated to*

Love is my theme. I sing of love. I know  
One whose rare charms have taught me something of  
The mystery which makes this life below  
The sweet precursor of that one above.  
In Arden's wood a lover on the trees  
Engraved the name of her who stirred his muse:  
But one must in prosaic days like these  
Resort to—well, let's say *The Orpheum News*.  
Imprinted then on *leaves*, not tree-barks, love  
Shall now be told. My fair one's name? Ah, well!  
Can she be the reincarnation of  
Orlando's sweet  
Enchantress? Who may tell?

---

### A TWILIGHT REVERIE.

Evening draws near. I think of her—of her.  
Vainly, alas! I try to solve life's strange  
Elusive mystery. To days that were  
Lighted by her dear presence my thoughts range.  
Years—O what sad, sad years!—have passed since then.  
Now o'er life's fairer days my memory  
Fondly doth dwell: I live them once again.  
Restored is my lost love: she looks on me  
And smiles: my arms her yielding form enfold.  
No words we speak: our souls, as our lips meet,  
Converse each with the other. All is told  
In one long kiss,  
So rapturously sweet!



## A VALENTINE.

Let me my thoughts, St. Valentine,  
Express: one's heartchords will  
On this most gracious day of thine  
Vibrate with love's glad thrill.  
There are two Orpheum artists who  
Encheer and entertain  
This town of ours, and I do  
Love well the peerless twain.  
I can't tell which I love the more,  
Yea, I am in a plight.  
Each maid I tenderly adore:  
Now I'm distracted quite.  
Both are so radiant. Ah! my  
Fond heart writhes in Love's snares.  
Really my soul's aflame. Can I  
Resist such charms as theirs?  
I know men in the fierce throes of  
A passionate despair  
Struggle in vain: but will not Love  
Now deign to hear a prayer?  
Come, kindly Hope, and 'mid the gloom  
Cheer me. O! may thy smiles  
On me alight as towards the tomb  
I tread life's weary miles.  
Enable me with braver heart,  
Sweet Hope, in life to *act my part*.

Red lips just made for kissing, eyes in whose  
Unfathomable depths love seems to dwell.  
But we poor men who have fond hearts to lose—  
Yes, we had best beware of Beauty's spell.

Still certain things are tempting, and some day  
Her lips may so alluring prove that we  
A kiss shall steal therefrom. Yes, come what may,  
We'll risk all danger for such ecstasy.

---

### A SPINSTER.

*Lines written in an album of a young lady who on one merry  
making occasion playfully alluded to herself as a confirmed  
spinster.*

Sweet one, I trust thy future may  
Prove joyous as thy days now are :  
I trust as thou shalt tread life's way  
No shadows may thy pleasures mar.  
Surrounded now by those who more  
Than love thee as a friend, I trow  
Earth will for thee have joys in store  
Rarer than all thou knowest now.

*Written on Saint Valentine's Eve, 1900.*

## I.

A privilege, ah yes! is mine—  
Love grants all men a right:  
I therefore may, St. Valentine,  
Construct some rhymes this night.  
Earth's fairest maid I would address  
But her name must not be  
Revealed, nor yet dare I express  
All thoughts that come to me.  
Could I—but no, I must, dear friend,  
Keep my heart's secret till life's end.

## II.

And yet 'tis sweet to whisper of  
Life's dearest joy: 'tis sweet  
Indeed to know there is a love  
Can make our lives complete.  
Enshrined within my heart is her  
Bright imaged form: her well  
Remembered smiles my heart-depths stir  
As on the past I dwell.  
Could I—but no, I must, dear friend,  
Keep my heart's secret till life's end.

Evening has come: I sit here in my room  
Dreaming of her whom I so fondly love.  
I see her face amid the deepening gloom—  
That fair sweet face: I hear the music of  
Her gentle voice, and O! in my heart's core  
Peace, so long absent, dwells again, and I  
Am happy and contented: yea, far more  
Than I was in the days that have gone by.  
The ecstasy of a new love is mine:  
Earth's fairest daughter dawns upon my sight.  
Red lips, bright eyes and smiles that are divine  
Seem too much to withstand. I am this night  
O'erwhelmed by her rare charms: my soul, ah yes!  
Now knows a rapture I can not express.

---

'NEATH LOWERING SKIES.

My heart is sorrowful to-night:  
I am to lose a friend, alas!  
Soon, not from memory but from sight,  
She—that dear friend of mine—shall pass.  
Earth hath its sorrows: there will be  
Days very dark and dull and drear  
In this our goodly town when she,  
The girl I love, is no more here.  
Hope will, though, through the mists of tears  
Point to the blest delights that are  
Awaiting me in future years.  
Thus cheered by hope's resplendent star,  
The shadows that might otherwise  
Enshroud my soul will drift away.  
Right cheerily 'neath lowering skies  
Shall I stern duty's call obey.  
On life's way, steep and rugged though it be,  
No fears I'll know, for Hope will walk with me.

Ere I met her the world seemed so  
Dreary and dull and full of care;  
I knew not then, as now I know,  
That life is beautiful and fair.  
Her smiles encheer me, and as I  
Peer in her eyes I'm conscious of  
A new found hope that cannot die—  
The hope that I may gain her love.  
The world has been transformed since her  
Entrancing smiles made skies so blue:  
Rare are the joys fate will confer  
Some day on those whose love is true.  
On Hope's low whispered promise I  
Now with the fullest faith rely.

---

## AN UNDAUNTED SPIRIT.

May I not realize some day  
All those blest dreams of mine when I  
Roamed carelessly along life's way  
In youth's bright time long gone by?  
Earth then was fair. When one is young  
Life is most precious: my mind dwells  
On those dear days. The songs then sung  
Re-echo still in my heart-cells.  
And yet in these sad, later years  
Some comfort comes to me. Hope still  
'Mid the encircling gloom appears  
In all her beauty. Nay, I will  
Let no grief daunt my spirit. May not I  
Enjoy life in the coming years? Ah, why  
Yield to despair when Hope stands smiling by?

My thoughts are free, yet O! they never stray  
Away from her—my fond soul's true ideal.  
Red, sweet and tempting are her lips: some day  
I shall therefrom a thousand kisses steal.  
Ere in my life she came I knew not of  
Love's subtle power: now my heart knows more  
Of this world's joy. I in my new found love  
Rejoice as I have never done before.  
A rapture, such as sometimes in sweet dreams  
Sweeps o'er the slumbering soul, doth in me stir:  
My longing eyes behold hope's star that gleams  
In the bright heavens as I think of her.  
Let hope's fair star shine on my life's pathway  
Ever as now. 'Tis sweet to think I may  
Yet gain the favor of my love—some day.

---

#### THAT HEART OF MINE.

A girl, whose name I'll not impart,  
Now has possession of  
No less a thing than my fond heart,  
And I may die from love.  
Now who without a heart can live?  
Each day I sadly pine.  
Will not this beauteous maiden give  
Me back that heart of mine?  
Am I to die? Life seems so dear  
Now in the springtime of the year.



*Respectfully dedicated to that chummy pair of girls whose inspiring names are indissolubly united in the author's lines.*

A happy dream I had last night,  
 Methought that I was at the store,  
 Noon had arrived and I was quite  
 Anxious to have some grub, therefore  
 No dallying I did but I  
 Rushed rapidly across the way,  
 And sour krout and hash and pie  
 I called for while in that café.  
 Near me John Rockefeller sat  
 Enjoying strawberries and cream:  
 Ere long we two had quite a chat.  
 Said he [ah! this was but a dream]  
 "Will you accept my check for a  
 Mere million dollars, worthy friend?"  
 "Most surely I shant say you nay",  
 I answered: then John quickly penned  
 A check: and O! when I got this  
 Large sum I almost had a stroke.  
 Now I shall on a life of bliss  
 Enter forthwith, then—I awoke.  
 Yes, and discovered I was—"broke".

---

NOTA BENE.

*I "write" like Poe!* But is it po-  
 Lite to be Poe-like, Miss Briscoe?  
 My style is *somewhat* different, though,  
 From Edgar Allan's, Miss Briscoe.

Earth is most beautiful: and is it not  
Vain to brood over wrongs beyond control?  
Endeavor to be cheerful: do not blot  
Life's fairest joys from out the longing soul.  
Youth is the time for gladness, hope and love:  
No frowns then come upon fair Fortune's face:  
Death seems far off, and there are day-dreams of  
Unclouded lives that show no sorrow's trace.  
Not mine it is to revel in these joys:  
Gone has my youth's all too speedy reign.  
Ah! I have lived to learn that Time destroys,  
Ne'er to restore, those castles built in Spain.

---

## ASK NOT HER NAME.

My thoughts to-night are pleasant ones—they're of a gentle maid:  
Ask not her name, for I won't tell; I really am afraid.  
Unless you look into my heart or search these lines you'll ne'er  
Discover the sweet name bestowed upon my lady fair.

*To two happy girls, who have sometimes pretended to be unhappy,  
these lines, written by an unhappy man who has sometimes  
pretended to be happy, are respectfully dedicated.*

Sometimes the world looks bright to me,  
No clouds are in the sky,  
And my heart knows an ecstasy  
Each hour that glides by.  
Deep draughts of joy I quaff, the things  
That vex me disappear,  
I seem to fly on rapid wings  
To some bright, distant sphere.  
Earth fades from view as I afar  
In the empyrean rise,  
Reaching at last a beauteous star  
Encircling Paradise:  
I hear the happy voices of  
Redeemed souls who make clear  
The strange, sweet mystery of love  
In hymns we all hold dear.  
There comes to me a peace divine  
That I before ne'er knew,  
Exceeding any dream of mine  
That could on earth come true.  
Rare vision of a moment! How  
Ephemeral, alas!  
Ravishing a soul that now  
Into night's gloom must pass.

My mind this day is gladdened by a hope.  
 It may seem strange a torn envelope  
 Should have the power into my life to bring  
 So fair and dear a hope. I needs must sing.  
 Ah! if a something, vague yet sweet, should stir  
 My deeper feelings while I think of *her*,  
 Am I to blame? Tell me, is it a sin  
 Endeavoring thus by rhythmic means to win  
 Perchance a smile from one whose name is now  
 Engravened on my heart? Ah, I somehow  
 Am apprehensive, as all "authors" are,  
 Concerning certain things—now in a car  
 One fateful morn I lost my heart, ah me!  
 Can this  
 Kind maid restore it? We shall see.

---

### MAPLE HALL.

Maple Hall. That charming spot, that dear, belov'd retreat!  
 Amid a world of flowers it stands, half hidden from the street.  
 Yes, many a stroll with May I've had within its pleasant shade,  
 Just at the dewy hour of eve when day's about to fade.  
 Viewed thus by twilight's mystic ray its beauties ne'er can be  
     forgot,  
 Each blooming flower reflecting plain the peace that lingers round  
     that spot.  
 Rare are those flowers, sweet is May; no maiden is so fair:  
 Nor birds that carol sweetly can with her their songs compare.  
 Oh May, dear May, in after years I hope, what'er thy lot may be,  
 No grief nor aught that causes pain shall ever, ever come near  
     thee.

Dare I a fair young maid address this day,  
Or must I not my humble offering send?  
Let me, however, not to fear give way;  
Love now is favored and may not offend.  
Yes, thanks to thee, Saint Valentine, I now  
Have freedom to dispatch these lines of mine:  
I, this glad day, am privileged to bow  
Lowly in homage at sweet Beauty's shrine—  
Longing to have her for my valentine.

---

## JUNO'S SWANS.

“And wheresoe'er we went, like Juno's swans,  
Still we went coupled, and inseparable.”

—Shakespeare.

Saint Valentine, thy loyal subjects may  
Give utterance to all their thoughts this day.  
Unhesitatingly I call the Muse,  
Relying on her kindness to infuse  
Some life and spirit in the lines I now  
Am wishful to compose. My thoughts somehow  
Are pleasant—very pleasant ones, for they  
Concern two maids whom I met on a day  
Never to be forgotten. Ofttimes of  
Each maid I think, for both of them I love.  
No other maids so sweet in this world dwell  
As they whose names I dinna care to tell.

Fair maiden, in youth's happy time all things appeareth fair,  
 Life seemeth sweet, and mirth prevails unclouded by a care;  
 On every hand are blessings found, and friends are true and kind,  
 Refulgent beams Hope's star, and peace abideth in the mind.  
 Each day brings newer pleasures, rarer joys and more delight:  
 Nor fears nor dark forebodings come to mar youth's visions bright.  
 Contentment, health and beauty mark the reign of youth, and thou  
 Enjoyest all these blessings. Yes, most favored maiden, now  
 The pathway through life's fairest scenes thou dost with gladness  
 tread.

O! when have passed these joyous days, when youth's bright time  
 has fled,

When thy now sunny brow is marked by time, yet then to thee  
 No grief I trust shall come: and though youth's gladsome sea-  
 son be

Soon over, yet in future years I hope that thou shalt not  
 E'er know a grief, e'er lose a friend. O! happy be thy lot.  
 Now Fortune smiles upon thee. Could a maid be favored more!  
 Dear maiden, mayst thou thus be blest till all life's scenes are o'er.

## A TWILIGHT RETROSPECT.

Evening is drawing near, its mystic shades  
 Mantle the earth with many a sombre hue:  
 In the far west the sunlight, ere it fades,  
 Lingers awhile to bid a last adieu.  
 Yea, now's the time I love in thought to stray  
 'Mid scenes and pleasures of the olden days,  
 Clouds that have gathered memory drives away,  
 And brings the past undimmed to meet my gaze.  
 Recalled to mind is many a pleasant scene  
 That lights the gloom of twilight's fleeting hour:  
 Hope is revived, and far-off Florentine  
 Unfolds its joys,  
 Restored by memory's power.



*Respectfully dedicated to—*

“Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll !”

Just now, as I muse o'er those lines addressed  
Unto this mystic flood, my o'erwrought soul  
Out of its prison leaps ; the radiant west,  
Dappled with dying day's fond, lingering gleams,  
Holds me entranced ; I gaze with ecstasy  
On the vast world of waters, and life seems  
Now O ! so happy by the sounding sea.  
Love's dream, that I thought died long, long ago,  
Revisits me ; again within my veins  
Pulsates the wildish blood's enquickened flow.

Over the waves float music's soft, faint strains.  
How peaceful and how wondrous strange is this  
Sweet quiet moment in the eventide.  
Calm is my mind ; with what ease I dismiss  
All the old cares o'er which erstwhile I've sighed.  
Lightly the zephyrs o'er the salt waves steal ;  
Peace broods upon the scene, and in my breast  
A happiness, serene and strong and real,  
Has taken her abode and brought me—rest.  
Rest ! O most rapturous moment ! ne'er before  
In this world have I gained a knowledge of  
A thing so precious. I have on this shore  
Learn'd what means rest, and happiness, and love.

But now the shadows fall upon the strand ;  
Lower and lower sinks the parting sun ;  
At last the stars look down upon the land ;  
I turn me homeward for the day is done.  
Under the star-lit sky I walk along,  
Pondering on joys that I shall know no more :  
Ephemeral joys—a sweet, soul-haunting song  
Sung by some nymph, whose fair form on the shore,  
Revealed in sunset's golden sheen, I saw.

My thoughts are pleasant ones, for they  
 Are of a little maid I saw  
 Delving in sand, and in this way  
 Enjoying herself on the shore.  
 Let me send her a verse or two ;  
 It may perhaps remind her of  
 New friends—'mong whom is the one who  
 Endeavors here to show his love.

New friends may prove, ah ! don't forget,  
 As true as old ones ; when our hands  
 Under the " moated castle " met,  
 Gladly my heart sang on the sands.  
 How soon the waves, though, swept away  
 Those grand and stately castles we  
 Erected that bright, happy day  
 Near the resounding summer sea !

---

THE BOY.

Joyously you shout and play  
 On the sand-drifts by the pier,  
 Happy as the livelong day,  
 Never sad when " Madie " 's near.

---

THE GIRL.

Visions of a delightful isle  
 I oft behold. Near the glad sea  
 Romps a fair child ; a radiant smile  
 Graciously she bestows on me.  
 I sit close by the breakers wild,  
 Noticing things—sea, sky, ships, pier.  
 I note with more joy, though, the child  
 At play upon the sands anear.

Most strongly does God's wondrous sea  
Allure me. Ah! those days were so  
Divinely beautiful which we  
Enjoyed here one short year ago.  
Lightly as then the salt breeze blows  
In from the deep, but on the shore  
No friend now greets me. I miss those  
Endeared delights that are no more.

Now the forsaken beach I pace  
Alone—alone! Life, which is now  
Unlighted by her beaming face,  
Grows very wearisome somehow.  
Hope, though, shall be my comforter.  
This life were sad without hope's cheer.  
One summertime I walked with her  
Near this now desolated pier.

---

THE DAYS THAT WERE.

My mind retains the image of  
A girl whose sweet and sunny smile  
Drew me to her and won my love  
Eons ago on a fair isle.  
Love, do you think how oft we sat,  
In those days which were so care-free,  
Near the wild waves, which beat on that  
Enchanted island of the sea?

Now here in loneliness I sit  
And think of days—the days that were!  
Useless it is to mourn, yet it  
Grieves me that I am far from her.  
Hope, though, her happiest song sings;  
Thus cheered, why now give way to woe?  
Each day that passes by but brings  
Nearer the joys I am to know.

*Addressed to a fair suffragist.*

March on, O radiant pilgrim ; victory  
Is soon to perch upon the banner thy  
Small hands wave in the breeze. Can man deny  
So fair a woman aught? Ah! thou shouldst be  
Possessed of every right. Man's gallantry  
Has been enquickened, watching thee pass by.  
On life's bleak roads, beneath a sullen sky,  
Exultingly thou goest. Verily,  
Beauty like thine must conquer ; thou'lt secure  
Enfranchisement ere long. O! peerless one,  
Haply the Senators at Washington  
Are men whose hearts thy witching smiles can lure.  
When they see thee, then—then, ye may be sure,  
New truths shall stir them ; thy fight will be done.

February 18, 1913.

---

HOPE'S STAR.

My heart, O maiden of the dreamy eyes,  
Is sorely stricken. Since along our street,  
So short a time ago, your dainty feet  
So fleetly flew, I've heaved unnumbered sighs.  
Peace dwells no more with me. I have grown wise,  
Having now learned to love. Am I to meet  
One of these days the suffragist whose sweet,  
Enrapturing smiles enthralled me? My soul cries,  
But she to whom it cries may never hear.  
Earth seems so joyless now since she passed by.  
Hope's star I still discern, though, in yon sky,  
And I am cheered. I know the time is near  
When I shall meet her. Life! O! 'tis so dear,  
Now that its sweetest, wildest joys are nigh.

February 20, 1913.

Men make mistakes, and women too—sometimes.  
 I ne'ertheless admire women; their  
 Slight faults I overlook. She who is fair  
 Should be (I trust that Phoebe likes these rhymes)  
 Permitted to engage in life's worst crimes;  
 However willfully she acts, who dare  
 Object, e'en though she drive us to despair?  
 Earth's daughters rule men in all lands and climes.  
 Beauty needs but to nod and men will go  
 Even to death for her. And yet, and yet,  
 Having so much, some women wish to get  
 A vote! They now want votes! It seems that no  
 Woman is satisfied—not one; and so  
 Now even Phoebe is a suffragette!  
 February 21, 1913.

---

### MARCHING ON.

*To the marching suffragists in general, and to one especial suffrage marcher in particular, this sonnet is respectfully dedicated.*

My sympathies, this dreary winter day,  
 In fullest measure go out to those who,  
 Strong in their faith and stout of heart, pursue  
 So pluckily their journey. Bravely they  
 Plod onward to the Capitol. O! may  
 Hope, which thus far hath cheered those pilgrims through  
 Oppressive, weary days, continue to  
 Encourage and sustain them on their way.  
 By day and night, to reach the destined goal,  
 Each of these gentle women struggles o'er  
 Heavy and miry roads. The rains that pour  
 And flood the narrow byways daunt no soul.  
 When woman wills, can aught her will control?  
 Nay, nay—she gains the object she strives for.  
 February 23, 1913.

On the warpath our Phoebe still sticks.  
 She stoops not to militant tricks ;  
     She knows that there lies  
     More harm in her eyes  
 Than in throwing slugs, hatchets and bricks.

---

## MY MARYLAND.

*The Lament of a fair Hiker overheard recently in the vicinity of  
 Havre de Grace.*

Suffragists should such sloppy states shake ;  
 Maryland's mud-meanderings make  
     Me mad ; still on clothes  
     Mud's a thing, I suppose,  
 To ad(d)mire. O how my feet ache !

---

## FINALE.

The "hike" 's o'er. My last line is penn'd.  
 All things, except love, have an end.  
     If love, too, could die  
     (Make a note of this) I  
 Would be happier. Farewell, dear friend.

---

## ESTHETICS.

I love beauty by day or by night,  
 As I might in this trite manner cite.  
     To take some slight delight  
     In a sightly light sprite,  
 Or a bright sybarite, seems quite right.



*Written on an Atlantic City ocean pier, September 20, 1912.*

O! what a perfect day is this!  
 The wild waves play around the pier.  
 Complete, indeed, would be my bliss  
 If Madeline were only here.

But Madeline is far away;  
 Her absence spoils the day for me.  
 My heart can not be light and gay  
 When she's not down here by the sea.

---

### IN RESTRAINT OF FLIGHT.

Poets love freedom, hence some dread  
 Acrostics; it irks them to write  
 A prescribed letter at the head  
 Of every line; it checks their flight.

Imagine, if you really can,  
 Walt Whitman, who had no regard  
 For verse rules, whose lines none could "scan"—  
 Imagine, I say, this free bard

Dallying with acrostics! No,  
 Walt's soul brooked no restraint, 'tis clear.  
 But my soul is less free, and so  
 I've worked out some acrostics here.

I find them not so hard to write.  
 The letters in a name I love  
 Suggest ideas and thoughts I might  
 Not otherwise have e'er dreamt of.

## THE PAST.

"The past is dead," so runs the song:  
 Ere dying, though, it tarries long  
     With us—in memory.  
 'The past ne'er dies: thoughts of it stay  
 To brighten or to cloud life's way  
     In days that are to be.

---

## THE FUTURE.

'Tis well that Fate denies  
 To all men 'neath the skies  
 A knowledge of the future. Joy or woe,  
     A better life, or worse,  
     A blessing or a curse—  
 Whate'er may come, 'twere best not now to **know**.

---

## LIFE'S ROAD.

No hand clasps mine: no voice into  
     My ear breathes aught of love: no word  
 Of that dear story, old yet new,  
     I ever have in this world heard.

And yet undauntedly I go  
     Life's steep and rugged way along.  
 Love's joys, Hope says, I am to know:  
     And Hope encheers and makes me strong.

What if my body's fettered to  
A desk, the fact remains  
That I, in fancy, yet may view  
Fair Nature's vast domains.

O'er sylvan lakes on moonlit nights  
I oft float joyously;  
I view the world from snow-crowned heights,  
And it looks fair to me.

On Fancy's wings I journey far,  
I speed across the sea:  
The cities of the Old World are  
Familiar ones to me.

I am—in thought—a man of means,  
Whose vaults with gold are stored;  
To revel 'mid earth's fairest scenes  
I can full well afford.

---

#### AIR CASTLES.

Who has not dreamt day dreams and been  
The architect of fair  
And stately edifices in  
The unsubstantial air?

Just ere they topple over those  
Dream structures seem to be  
Most beautiful. Alas! Fate shows  
Us here her irony.

The bees are making honey,  
A thing I ne'er have done.  
The trusts are making money,  
And I am making none.

A critic, without meaning  
To cause me any pain,  
Might say I show a leaning  
Towards utterances inane.

But I was just expressing  
This thought which came to me—  
That one without possessing  
The talents of a bee,

Or who lacks golden treasure,  
May yet from life extract  
Some sweetness and some pleasure;  
I've found this is a fact.

---

#### A LOST WORLD.

The world will ne'er be mine again;  
I had it once; its treasures were  
All mine, all mine in those days when  
I fancied I was loved by her.

I was a fool—a fool. Yet still  
In that heart she so lightly tossed  
Away there rankles naught of ill.  
I pine not for the world I've lost.

A loveless world has no real charms.  
This I have learned—e'en I, I who  
Once clasped a woman in my arms  
And thought (poor fool!) that she was true.

What is it that sustains us in  
The conflict ever raging here?  
A hope it is that makes life dear—  
A hope that we the fight shall win.

We toil and suffer not in vain ;  
We know beyond these scenes of strife,  
In this probationary life,  
All that we strive for we shall gain.

What if Fate frowns and seems to thwart  
Our purposes at every turn !  
Sometime and somewhere we may earn  
The blessings we so long have sought.

---

## FATE.

At times life seems  
So sweet ; our dreams  
Of love are fair, and hope's star beams  
In a bright sky ;  
But storms arise,  
And sullen skies  
Frown on us as, with tear-dimmed eyes,  
We say—goodby.

Life is so strange,  
So full of change ;  
Fate oft steps in to disarrange  
Our plans, and we  
Lose hope and mourn :  
A friend has gone,  
And love, that seemed about to dawn,  
Is not to be.

The poets are the ones  
Best able of earth's sons  
To solve the mystery of life: they bring  
An overflowing love  
Into the study of  
All problems that are worth unraveling.

In highest realms they soar,  
In deepest depths they bore,  
Truth's glittering gems they glean from every field:  
With hearts that hope makes light  
They climb Parnassus' height.  
To them fair Nature doth her secrets yield.

And so these are the ones  
Best able of earth's sons  
To solve life's mystery: the joy of song  
They one time brought mankind,  
And some day they shall find  
Life's meaning for which they have searched so long.

---

### KNOWLEDGE.

Whyfore be wise? It is the fool  
Who enjoys life, who laughs and sings.  
The happiest are, as a rule,  
They who know least about earth's things.

Yet for the song and vacant laugh  
Of Folly's aimless creatures I  
Care not; let me on the rough path  
Of Knowledge struggle till I die.



*(Altruistic allusions alliteratively arranged.)*

Rarely repressing random rhymes,  
 Forever foraging for fame,  
 Ambitious authors always aim  
 To triumph these tempestuous times.

Some super-sensitive souls start  
 Faltering forward. Fear-filled fry!  
 But bolder bards bound bravely by,  
 Defying Death's destructive dart.

Harmony hypnotizes hearts.  
 We watch with wonder—we weak wights—  
 Homeric heroes haunt high heights,  
 Performing proud Parnassian parts.

Strange stars, so sparkling, so sublime,  
 Seem saying (saying smilingly),  
*Song's striving Sons shall surely see*  
*Success secured—sometime, sometime.*

---

## PRAGMATIC PSYCHOLOGY.

Practical people prefer  
 Perfectly pure provender.  
 Properly prepared peas  
 Particularly please  
 Poesy's proudest philosopher.

Why struggle on? It was not meant  
For me to scale this steep ascent.

I fear  
To venture further. 'Tis in dreams—  
Yes, only then the summit seems  
A near.

Why should I toil so? I'm aware  
That I the sunny heights can ne'er  
Attain.

I know I'll fail, and yet to me  
The struggle does not seem to be  
All vain.

I'll fail, that is, from this mount's crest  
To catch a glimpse of Heaven's blest  
Abode;  
But Love's refracted light may shed  
Its rays upon me as I tread  
Life's road.

This glory streaming from above—  
This light, this flashing light of love  
From those  
Illumined peaks shall fortify  
My wandering spirit until my  
Life's close.

---

#### A POET'S SOUL.

A poet's soul is free; it will o'erleap  
All barriers; to no mandate it yields;  
'Twould be a sad world were that soul to keep  
From frequenting fair Fancy's fragrant fields.

Youth's hopes have faded—those that promised well.  
 Love, fame, wealth are denied me; vainly do  
 I try to climb the craggy mount where dwell  
 The Muses nine, one whom I've dared to woo.

And she, the fairest Goddess of them all,  
 Whose kindly smile I one time strove to gain,  
 Will ne'er hear of my struggles and my fall.  
 Yet I have known her; life has not been vain.

My end is near; I do not feel I've made  
 A failure of this life; although I ne'er  
 Have scaled the haunted mountain, yet I've strayed  
 Around its base, and dreamt some sweet dreams there!

### THE LADY OF BETHAYRES.

"At last, in one mad hour, I dared to pour  
 The thoughts that burst their channels into song,  
 And sent them to thee—such a tribute, lady,  
 As Beauty rarely scorns, even from the meanest."  
 —Edward Bulwer Lytton

When one has conscientiously  
 Performed a task of any kind;  
 It is a pleasant thing to be  
 Commended for the same, I find.

The poem, lady, I sent you  
 (I'm growing very frank these days)  
 Was not so bad a one; I knew  
 That it was worthy of your praise.

Worthy, at any rate, of some  
 Acknowledgment: still in due time  
 It may be my reward will come.  
 Yes, some day you will read my rhyme.

As yet you have not thanked me, though,  
 For those lines o'er which I so long  
 Have toiled; but one should not, I know,  
 Expect too much for a mere song.

Perhaps I am a foolish man  
To dream dreams, as I sometimes do,  
Which reason tells me never can  
In this life here on earth come true.

But my dreams harm no one, it seems,  
Except myself; hence, though unwise,  
It can't be wrong to dream the dreams  
I never am to realize.

---

### NO QUARREL.

*A sequel to Day Dreaming.*

Upon the whole, I don't believe  
That I have injured myself much  
By dreaming dreams. Why should I grieve  
Because I have indulged in such?

Wise, cold and practical men, who  
Forge to the front in business strife,  
Might with great disapproval view  
What they regard my useless life.

Yet I have known something of  
Joys those wise, practical and cold  
Men may have missed, whose only love  
Lies in the mad pursuit of gold.

Between those men, though, and myself  
There's no dispute; we're all in quest  
Of happiness; they who think wealth  
Secures it may perhaps know best.

Quarrel? O! no. Harsh feelings? None.  
We all intend to gain success  
As we view it; so let each one  
In his own way seek happiness.

When we're engrossed in schemes for wealth  
To others' rights we oft are blind ;  
But greed sometimes defeats itself,  
And money means not joy we find.

To seek for happiness is right,  
And very natural ; yes, quite so.  
But in the quest to shirk and slight  
Duty and work is selfish though.

Why, why devote in its pursuit  
Our days and nights without a pause?  
The "prize" may turn to Dead Sea fruit  
When seized ; then we shall curse the cause,

Shall curse the cause that led us to  
Transfix upon a self-raised cross  
Our sordid, shriveled souls. But who,  
When such souls die, will mourn the loss?

---

#### AN EARLY CALL.

The poets all appear to die  
At a young age, at least the great  
Bards do ; this worries me, for I  
Have not been feeling well of late.

Byron and Burns and Chatterton,  
And Keats and Shelley, likewise Poe,  
Died young. How short a life each one  
Lived here ! Mine may be short also.

---

#### A CHEERING AFTERTHOUGHT.

If bards die young, I need not fear  
An early summons from life's stage ;  
For if but *bards* die young, 'tis clear  
I'll live to an extreme old age.

Life's tasks seem light when one is young,  
Fame's ladder I once hoped to climb;  
I still stand on its lowest rung,  
To reach the top requires time.

Time! Yes, and something else one needs  
To gain the apex of youth's dreams:  
One must have genius who succeeds,  
And this I have not got, it seems.

I, being fifty, have had quite  
Enough time for my ill-starred bout  
With fate. Mine is a losing fight,  
I'll soon be knocked completely out.

I'll struggle on though, for I'm bound  
To scale Fame's ladder. What! too old?  
Nay, I'll mount at least one more round  
Before I'm laid out stiff and cold.

Ambition's longings can't be stilled.  
Who can his restless soul subdue?  
In later years one's mind is filled  
With dreams as wild as e'er youth knew.

Ambition! Is it vanity,  
Mere vanity—base, low and coarse,  
Too vast and too intense to be  
Controlled by any human force?

Or can it be the promptings of  
A higher nature, reaching out  
For truer beauty, truer love  
In this world where men fear and doubt?

I sometimes think it is a gift—  
A heaven-sent one to us here,  
Which serves to strengthen and uplift  
Our souls, and which makes life more dear.



But few of us shall realize  
 Our hopes and ideals: yet the same  
 Give rest to life: call not unwise,  
 Therefore, the one who dreams of fame.

Laugh not at those who may appear  
 Too over sure of having their  
 Fond prayers all answered—if not here,  
 They may be granted, then, elsewhere.

---

### CALUMNY.

“Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not  
 escape calumny.”—Shakespeare.

Detractors may subdue  
 And wholly crush those who  
 Are of too frail a fibre to endure  
 The worries incident  
 To life, but that are meant  
 To try us and to help us, be ye sure.

Praise, I believe, has less  
 To do with one's success  
 Than many think. Calumniators may  
 Prove useful. Calumny,  
 Rather than flattery,  
 Oft stimulates our efforts in life's fray.

In the long run a man  
 Can thwart and rout a clan  
 Of slanderers. One with a conscience clear  
 And a stout heart is well  
 Equipped to meet and quell  
 The foes whose arts a true man need not fear.

(Being a purgatorial introductory to *Hell*.)

The place that I would now review  
Is most unpleasant; no one, though,  
Thinks it exists, except a few  
Unhappy wretches whom I know.

The theme's played out; 'tis seldom brought  
Up for discussion now, and I  
Approach it gingerly. I ought  
To pass the matter coldly by.

Less than one hundred years ago  
Men—many of them (how could they?)  
Believed in this abode of woe.  
How happier men are to-day!

We have, 'tis true, our cares and griefs,  
But ne'ertheless we're not downcast;  
We are not tortured by beliefs  
Like those harsh ones taught in days past.

Why, then, this old dispute renew?  
Whyfore revive sad themes? Ah well!  
I must, for some one told me to  
Express my views concerning hell.

To speak of a place which has no  
Existence save in some one's vile  
Imagination, doesn't show  
Much sense—still it may cause a smile.

A smile! Well, if my lines provoke  
A smile I'll deem myself repaid.  
So let's to Hell. Better thus joke  
And smile than sigh and be afraid.

There is no reason to regard  
The future apprehensively;  
I know when I'm laid 'neath the sod  
There will be rest—sweet rest for me.

O! it is better to believe  
That which will make life joyous here  
Than to have views that make us grieve,  
And creeds that make us cringe and fear.

Not that fair land beyond the sky—  
That blest abode of Love—  
Does Lola seem to think that I  
Have gained some knowledge of :

But of the nether world she thinks  
I know a deal ; and though  
My very soul within me shrinks  
From going down below,

Yet for this fairest of all maids  
I must, before my time,  
Visit the depths of Hades' shades  
And write it up—in rhyme.

Lola consigns me now to—well,  
I shan't demur ; I'll go,  
As otherwise I could not tell  
About those imps below.

For hitherto I have not dealt  
(This may seem strange) with things  
Infernal : nay, I've sometimes felt  
A wish to soar on wings

Far, far beyond our world, ah yes !  
To some remoter sphere,  
Where I might find a happiness  
I never have known here.

But now I must forbear to soar ;  
Indeed, I must *descend*  
To interview the devils for  
Our fair, inquiring friend.

Just here it seemeth passing strange,  
 It really does, you know,  
 That Lola's rambling thoughts should range  
 To those imps down below.

'Tis not mere curiosity  
 On Lola's part, ah no!  
 She really feels a sympathy  
 For those poor imps below.

I wish for her sake I could tell  
 About their various acts:  
 When time permits a trip to hell,  
 I'll ascertain the facts.

I never yet have gone to—well,  
 To Jericho; and so  
 There's little now that I can tell  
 About those imps below.

The theme, as one may well suppose,  
 Affrights me, and I grow  
 Real pale the while I think of those  
 Poor little imps below.

\* \* \* \* \*

But come—enough of raillery,  
 More soberly I ought  
 To treat my subject; so let me  
 Give it a serious thought.

The hell idea has made men mad;  
 But I was pleased indeed  
 That Lola took no stock nor had  
 E'er shared in such a creed.

The twinkle in her eye while she  
 Bade me delve into this  
*Deep* subject showed some chaff from me  
 Might not be deemed amiss.

There are some things that I somehow  
 Am apt to treat sometimes  
 In lightsome vein ; but let me now  
 Con somewhat graver rhymes.

Think not I lack in earnestness.  
 The subject given me  
 Stirs up my strongest feelings : yes,  
 I feel its gravity.

I have a serious side to my  
 Composite nature ; so  
 From now on in these verses I  
 That serious side will show.

\* \* \* \* \*

The mind that holds to hell is crazed,  
 And they who harp thereon  
 Insulteth Him who should be praised—  
 The Over-ruling One.

We mortals would, I here maintain,  
 (And, pray you, mark me well)  
 Become most hopelessly insane  
 By a belief in hell.

Why if ten trillion miles away  
 There were a hell, I'd see  
 No beauty in this fair spring day :  
 'Twould have no charms for me.

For while beneath the clear bright skies  
 On flowered meads I'd stroll,  
 I'd hear the curses and the cries  
 Of some poor tortured soul.

My sympathy would all go out  
 Towards those who writhe in pain :  
 I, too, might clench my fist no doubt,  
 Unable to restrain

My horror of the monstrous wrong  
Imposed on man: to me  
The thought but makes of prayer and song  
A hollow mockery.

I know how Hell in years now past  
Was worked for all 'twas worth;  
I know how its feared terrors cast  
Their shadow on the earth:

I know all this, and O! I do  
Rejoice as ne'er before  
That this old lurid bug-a-boo  
Can blast men's lives no more.

The world has wiser grown; the years  
Have brought new truths: we find  
A joy in life when olden fears  
No more disturb the mind.

Fear never saved a soul, ah no!  
Man's ingenuity  
Can not devise a hell, I trow,  
That ever will move me.

But love just gets me every time.  
Love wins where hatred fails.  
Love sweet and wondrous and sublime:  
Love—love alone—avails.

How beautiful this world of ours!  
My heart with joy doth sing:  
I read Love's promise in the flowers  
That crown these days of spring.



I'll lurk not in the shadows of  
 A morbid fancy—nay,  
 In the glad light of radiant Love  
 I'll live my life alway.

With Love triumphant, hades' gloom  
 Will disappear; and we  
 Shall catch a glimpse, this side the tomb,  
 Of joys that are to be.

---

## WE SAINTS.

*Supposed to have been written by a disciple of Jonathan Edwards.*

Let tortured sinners writhe;  
 We saints shall all derive  
 A joy in gloating over their despair.  
 We'll mock their tears, their sighs,  
 Their agony, their cries.  
 What in hell—nay, what *in heaven* need we care?

---

## MY CHOICE.

There are men who'd prefer in heaven to dwell,  
 With some there they detest,  
 Rather than be elsewhere a little spell  
 With those they love the best.

I'd rather be on earth with her I love,  
 E'en for a little space,  
 Than spend eternity in heaven above—  
 She absent from that place.

A soul (whatever that may be)  
Exists, so some declare,  
Within our bodies, although we  
Can't tell exactly where.

It may within the heart abide ;  
It might lurk in the brain ;  
Or in the lungs it might reside ;  
'Tis hard to ascertain.

The soul exists at any rate,  
So say these cock-sure men ;  
And then they solemnly dilate  
On things beyond our ken.

That precious thing which none can find  
Is, so they have declared,  
Immortal. "Logic" of this kind  
Could very well be spared.

I've read the Good Book—read it through :  
I learn therein that we  
Are mortals. 'Tis God only who  
Hath immortality.

---

#### WHY WORRY?

I care not for power or wealth ;  
Love is better, I think—love and health.  
Of this world I am fond ;  
As for a life beyond—  
Why worry?—'twill care for itself.

Life here needs our care : though 'tis sweet  
Yet often, to make both ends meet,  
We must labor and sweat.  
Life hereafter ! Why fret  
And worry o'er it, I repeat.

Ah! ere long  
 I among  
 That majority vast  
 Will be found:  
 'Neath a mound  
 I shall have rest at last.

---

## IMMORTALITY.

"Dust thou art, to dust returnest,  
 Was not spoken of the soul."—Longfellow.

This poem is not an expression of the writer's personal sentiments, but of those disquieting ideas which, he believes, are held by all who endorse Longfellow's poetical advocacy of a widely-spread theological dogma, though not necessarily a dogma based on a proved or a tenable hypothesis.

To live alway! to know no rest! Does not  
 The thought appall the mind? Who without fear  
 Can contemplate a never-ending lot  
 Spent—ah, but where? Alas! we humans here

In darkness plod along life's toilsome way,  
 In doubt we ponder on futurity.  
 In the cold tomb, though, our encoffined clay  
 Soon shall be placed: then will the soul be free.

Free? Yes, but O! not privileged to die:  
 Not free to choose oblivion: not free  
 To seek a grave wherein to haply lie.  
 Nay, for the soul such rest is not to be.

*A last word on the subject.*

Think, think a while what it implies—  
 Eternal woe ; absurd !  
 It is the worst of all earth's lies,  
 And should no more be heard.

---

MAN

OR

CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY.

Man is a living soul. Immortal? Nay,  
 That gift in heaven he'll gain.  
 I'm happy knowing I shall rest for aye  
 If heaven I'll not attain.

---

SPIRIT SEEKERS.

Our scientists are able men—  
 Sane, shrewd and sensible ; but they  
 Are credulous, as a rule, when  
 From nature's realm they chance to stray.

I'm not, therefore, impressed at all  
 When some of these savants declare  
 That we can speak in a dark hall  
 With our dead friends whose wraiths are there.

Our rest in the grave is likely to be long and undisturbed ; no man can ever arouse us from that sleep of death ; God alone will do this, and He only at the end of time. One is led to think thus by reading various passages of Scripture. 1 Corinthians 15 : 52, 53 seem to warrant the writer in disapproving, as he does, of spiritualism ; these verses read—"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump ; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible." . . . "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

The dead from their graves don't stray far ;  
 They may hear God's voice, but not man's ;  
 "Materializers," therefore, are  
 A lot of brazen charlatans.

These "spiritists" (what nerve they've got!)  
 Profess to call men from the tomb  
 And trot them out before a lot  
 Of poor dupes in a darkened room.

The Bible, worthy some regard,  
 Says not till judgment day shall we  
 Be called from graves to meet our God  
 And receive immortality.

The world's worst fakirs are perhaps  
 The mediums who claim to hold  
 Communion, by means of raps,  
 With those who lie in churchyard mold.

When we are dead are we to be  
 Allowed to rest? Are "mediums", sir,  
 At their "seances", for a fee,  
 To drag us from the sepulchre?

But who gives credence to the claims  
 Of this low, vile and vulgar herd  
 Of cheats? 'Tis strange Professor James  
 Gave thought to matter so absurd.

Yet physicists, so-called, may be  
 Gulled with great ease in rooms made dark,  
 A female sharp from Italy\*  
 Found more than one an easy mark.

This dabbling in "occult" rot  
 Appears to weaken a man's brain ;  
 Some scientists seem to have got  
 By "spirit" studies quite insane.

\* Eusapia Paladino, who befooled a number of Europe's foremost scientists, but whose tricks were exposed by investigators in America.

A reply to a friend who in a critique on *Hell* expressed his dis-  
approbation of the poem's first two divisions.

You, who have read that piece of mine  
Called Hell, speak rather well of it:  
The last part, you declare, is fine;  
The rest you do not like a bit.

The—er—yes, technique, so to speak,  
Of the work is, you think, all wrong.  
The first cantos are crude and weak  
And foolish, but the last is strong.

The wit is strained, ill-timed and coarse  
Which permeates the early part,  
But the last section by its force  
And beauty moves, you say, your heart.

You tell me to eliminate  
Without undue delay the two  
First cantos; this, though, let me state,  
I hardly think that I will do.

There is, as every sane man knows,  
No hell; how absurd then for me,  
In the last of my three cantos,  
To treat the matter seriously!

It is not unbecoming to  
Treat certain themes with levity;  
This I occasionally do.  
Why in the present case blame me?

I've put in my verse some mild fun  
Which you style coarse; you praise part third  
Where, foolishly, over a non-  
Existing place I am perturbed.

The fact is I'm somewhat ashamed  
Of that part which has gained your praise.  
A place that now is seldom named  
Should not perturb one's mind these days.

To excise that part though, or cut  
Out those you mention, seems a shame.  
For your advice I'm thankful, but  
I don't propose to follow same.



*A Lenten Thesis.*

Some sad saints (I am not of them)  
Piously *es*-chew (not chew)  
Certain dishes, though 'tis true  
They may passionately love them.

Sausage (don't think I'm sardonic)  
Is tabooed on Fridays; though  
They select, with much gusto,  
Other dainties gastronomic.

Lobster salad with egg dressing,  
Oysters, fish, clams, pies and cheese,  
Vegetables—yes, all these,  
But no meat! It is distressing.

True, indulgences are given  
Certain saints, who in this case  
May eat, after saying grace,  
Meat without offending heaven.

Yes, for a consideration,  
Any saint who wants to eat  
A choice cut of bovine meat  
May obtain a dispensation.

Now when I dine in the city,  
E'en on Friday, I eat ham;  
Though of quail-on-toast I am  
So much fonder, more's the pity.

Then, too, I like port and sherry,  
And I'm partial to champagne,  
But from these I must abstain  
And drink beer. It's hard—yes, very.

Although Fortune is so fickle,  
 Yet 'gainst her one should not rail :  
 I therefore, eschewing quail,  
 Call for beer, ham and a pickle.

Truly I am an ascetic :  
 Yet I really ought to be  
 A bon-vivant. Fate to me  
 Is ironic. 'Tis pathetic.

Yet we poets—hem!—who waken  
 Slumbering souls to Beauty's reign,  
 Don't, in spiritual disdain,  
 Turn from Pickles, Beer and Bacon.

#### POLITICAL PARSONS.

Lines suggested on hearing socialism preached by certain professional revivalists and evangelists in a series of meetings advertised as a Religion (!) Forward Movement conducted by Spiritual Experts.

Republicans and Democrats,  
 And men of other parties, feel  
 For those who wear the white cravats  
 A veneration very real.

Yet, while most of us fairly dote  
 On churchmen, we don't like them to  
 Tell us just how we ought to vote  
 And run our business, as they do.

Men of the cloth, those holy men,  
 We all revere; yet they are, though,  
 Very impracticable when  
 It comes to business, as we know.

They should confine themselves to prayers  
 And sermons—things they know about.  
 Their views anent mundane affairs  
 Are almost too bizarre to spout.

The socialism spread by those  
 Ecclesiastic gentlemen  
 Is nauseous: hence I don't propose  
 To go and hear their talks again.

Let business folks help statesmen steer  
 The Ship of State o'er rocks and shoals;  
 The clergy then, whom we revere,  
 Can tend to our immortal souls.

---

### PREACHERS, POLICE AND POLITICS.

They who expound the different creeds, and they  
 Who wield the clubs in our bailiwicks,  
 Should not (officially, that is to say,)  
 Take sides with men embroiled in politics.

Why should one leave one's beat or why forsake  
 One's pulpit so as to electioneer?  
 Cops who desert their posts make a mistake;  
 Divines who do so err likewise, I fear.

Let politics alone: 'twere best to tend  
 To duty: politics won't suffer then:  
 They may get purer: so let preachers spend  
 Their time in rescuing poor fallen men.

Make better citizens of men and they  
 Will then support—this cannot be denied—  
 The worthiest candidates: 'tis in this way  
 That politics will become purified.

We need our churches and we need our jails.  
 Police and preachers, who wage war 'gainst sin,  
 Are useful workers. If, when preaching fails,  
 Men commit crime, the cops should run them in.

We must have laws—stern laws; and they must be  
 Sternly enforced; for order must prevail.  
 Where free men live there's a necessity  
 For priests, police, and the church, and the jail.

All those who, by example and precept,  
 Teach others to do right we should, of course,  
 Highly esteem; we also should respect  
 Those law preservers who are "on the force".

Men of the cloth—the black cloth or the blue—  
 Should be upheld and honored if they are  
 Honest and brave and competent and true,  
 As men should be who wear the cross or star.

---

MY HEAVEN.

If I am conscious when to me  
 Death draws anear,  
 I'll think, not of eternity,  
 But you, my dear.

One in the full possession of  
 Sound health may dwell  
 In thought upon a heaven above—  
 A nether hell.

A clear, strong mind might speculate  
 And form some vague  
 Ideas on future love and hate.  
 Should such things plague

A weary, dying man, dear love?  
 No, no. Ah! I  
 Shall find more comfort thinking of  
 You, when I die.

Here now with you—with you, my dear,  
 Life is so fair.  
 My heaven is on this earth here,  
 Not one elsewhere.

On Death's approach I need not shrink.  
 When from my view  
 Life is receding, I shall think  
 Of love—and you.

O life, strange mystery!  
O death that is to be  
For all who live on this revolving sphere.  
When pondering on these  
Perplexing verities  
The stoutest hearts have quailed from very fear.

This life upon the earth!  
Is it—O, is it worth  
The living? Who has not at moments sighed  
For rest? Ah well, soon we  
Shall with the sleepers be—  
With those who lived, loved, toiled and who have died.

Does death end all? Is there  
A happy world somewhere—  
One happier than this? Ah yes, it seems  
There must be: and some day  
We who have suffered may  
Gain there those joys we've known at times in dreams.

---

### MY SPIRIT'S FLIGHT.

In evening's gathering gloom I sit,  
And, while I think of many things,  
My world-worn spirit seems to flit  
Away from me on eager wings.

Freed of earth's clay, it wanders far  
Beyond the twilight's crimson skies,  
Reaching at last the golden star  
Whose course encircles Paradise.

And there it hears the anthems of  
 Angelic choristers ; and O !  
 It learns more of true peace and love  
 Than souls on earth can ever know.

The singing ceases : I, alas !  
 Awake to life, for from its flight  
 My spirit hath returned, to pass—  
 With me—into the darksome night.

---

 DEATH.

I know that I  
 Some day will die ;  
 I do not from the thought recoil.  
 Eternity !  
 Ah, it for me  
 Means rest from life's cares and turmoil.

What boon more blest  
 Is there than rest—  
 The rest eternal which is brought  
 To every one  
 When life is done ?  
 Whyfore recoil from this sweet thought ?

Death, thou art kind  
 And true. How blind  
 Are many of us to thy worth.  
 We wrong thee so ;  
 Thou art no foe,  
 But man's best friend upon the earth.



A hearse that needs some slight repairs  
Stands, horseless, on a wheelwright's pave;  
Along the city's thoroughfares  
It has borne many to the grave.

This somber vehicle outside  
The doorway of this noisy shop  
May be the one in which I'll ride  
When from life's serried ranks I drop.

A ride! The prospect pleases me.  
Why not? But it may be unmeet  
To muse thus by a factory  
Upon a crowded, busy street.

---

#### SURE THINGS.

Love is sweet, but who is sure  
It will to the end endure?  
Friendship—O, how blest! But do  
Friends not sometimes prove untrue?  
Faith—a state of mind, oft found  
Based on shifting, crumbling ground.  
Hope—ah! we but have in her  
A deceiving comforter.  
Charity, Hood doth declare,  
Is in Christendom most rare.  
Fame. Alas! the favor of  
The world's as shortlived as love.  
Wealth, so we are told, hath wings.  
What, then, are the certain things?  
Death and Taxes—don't you know?—  
Are the sure things here below.

I've seen poor, lifeless clay  
 Laid mournfully away  
 In God's green acre, and the tears have come  
 Into my eyes; although  
 Somewhere there is, I know,  
 For all of us a bright eternal home.

Glad are those moments when  
 That world beyond our ken  
 Is miraged on the cloudless summer skies.  
 What solace and what cheer  
 We weary ones find here  
 When such fair visions greet our yearning eyes.

"O, death, where is thy sting?"  
 Thou canst no terror bring  
 To trustful souls. Hearing the earth-clods fall  
 On coffins may bring fear  
 To doubting mortals here,  
 But not to those whom faith sustains through all.

---

#### ELEGIAC LINES.

I strolled in a cemetery  
 Not long since, and I was very  
 Much impressed by what I saw there. I found comfort, yes, and  
 cheer  
 'Mongst the graves. Ah! there were many;  
 And methought if there were any  
 Peace on earth that one who wished it might some day attain it  
 here.

It is comforting and cheering  
 To know that a day is nearing  
 When I, too, shall gain a rest as peaceful as is that of those  
 Who are in their graves a-lying.  
 Yes, I shall be occupying  
 One ere long, for my life's journey happily is near its close.

I peer into the future, but in vain ;  
 No sign nor semblance of a clue I gain  
 On which to base a hope of happier days.  
 The spirit in me falters as I gaze  
 Out on the night : no star in heaven appears :  
 My heart and mind are overwhelmed with fears.  
 A spectre looms amid the mists that shroud  
 The night : he looks on me and laughs aloud :  
 His wild, reverberating laughter chills  
 The blood that courses through my veins, and fills  
 My stricken, shuddering soul with awe. I feel  
 The nearness of an evil, vague yet real.  
 I grovel in the dank slough of despond,  
 No hopes in this world nor for the beyond.  
 Lost, lost ! Aye, lost : destined for hades' gloom.  
 E'en now my brain throbs at th' approaching doom.  
 Grief gnaws my soul. Too soon, too soon I'll sink  
 A dying wretch beside the grave's dread brink.

---

#### DEAD FRIENDS.

It matters not who dies, those who  
 Remain behind awhile must do  
     The work which yet  
 Is left unfinished : we must be  
 Regardful of ourselves, though we  
     The dead forget.

The dead ! We have no time to grieve :  
 There's gold to gain, fame to achieve.  
     Life so soon ends !  
 He is unwise who in this brief  
 Existence wastes his time in grief  
     Over dead friends.

"To be or not to be, that is the question."—Shakespeare.

I have a longing—'tis for rest,  
And with a bodkin bare  
I might the object of my quest  
Obtain, if I but dare.

Yet somehow I'm afraid to try  
The cold steel's sudden thrust.  
I, cowed by conscience, fear to lie  
Embedded in earth's crust.

I dread to live; but O! death seems  
A still more awful thing.  
Life's ills I'll bear. I fear the dreams  
Death's sleep to me may bring.

---

### LIFE.

Why do we men and women strive  
So hard here in this vale of tears,  
Through all the passing toil-filled years,  
To keep (is it worth while) alive?

Wealth, love, perchance the bubble fame  
Allures us; yet one might possess  
All these, and know not happiness.  
We must, perforce, though, play the game.

One thing, its shortness, should commend  
The game to us. Ah! let us then,  
Us players—children, women, men—  
Play on, play on until the end.

Give me that rest which knows  
 No wakening. Let those  
 Who vaguely dream of life beyond the grave  
 Gain their fair dreamings; when  
 I leave the world, ah! then  
 An undisturbed and endless rest I crave.

When I am dead may no  
 One, whether high or low,  
 Saint, sinner, god or demon, interfere  
 With my sleep. Why destroy  
 My long desired joy—  
 Rest: of all blessings that which is most dear.

The world is fair, and yet  
 For all the jewels set  
 In Heaven's diadem I'd not retrace  
 My steps on life's road. No,  
 I would not wish to go  
 Back and restart upon life's long, stern race.

Rest for my spirit—rest  
 For heart and mind and breast.  
 To be as though you were not. O! give me  
 That perfect rest—that deep,  
 Profound, calm, peaceful sleep  
 Through all, ah, yes! through all eternity.

I am so tired; yes,  
 And, look you, happiness  
 Here or elsewhere is yet not rest; and for  
 That boon I long—surcease  
 Of life's cares, for that peace,  
 That rest complete when one shall be no more.

---

### THIS LIFE.

This life seems the happiest when  
 We are young; we enjoy it most then.  
 Yes, life's worth living—once.  
 But who would, save a dunce,  
 Want to live it all over again?

This battle for existence ought  
To those who must participate  
Therein, and war 'gainst adverse fate,  
Prove—well, a most absorbing sport.

How few there are who want to die.  
Even the very oldest cling  
To life; it seems to most a thing  
That is worth valuing—but why?

We struggle on. What for? Who knows?  
The blind and halt on dark ways grope;  
And many, many, without hope,  
Bear uncomplainingly earth's woes.

Some dread life more than death, and seek  
Their rest before the day is done—  
Their rest ere it is fairly won.  
Few, very few, though, are so weak.

For one faint heart a million brave  
And valiant souls face fearlessly  
This life and that eternity  
Beyond the confines of the grave.

---

### BENEVOLENCE.

O the warm and hearty grip!  
O the smile upon the lip!  
The cheering word, the kindly beaming eye.  
The religion which doth bring  
Such blest fruit to blossoming  
Is one that had its origin on high.



Smiles and brave words from him, the while  
His sorrow-burdened spirit cries  
For rest—for rest that Fate denies ;  
Yet his face wears a cheering smile.

Smiles, aye ! and laughter too, and they—  
His fellow men, his friends—those who  
Know or believe they know him, do  
Not deem him otherwise than gay.

This bold front kept up through the years !  
Is there not pathos in the bluff ?  
O hollow pretense ! 'Tis enough  
To move—yes, e'en the gods to tears.

---

## GOD'S CHILDREN.

By merit we may hope to win  
Our Father's favor while on earth.  
'Tis not the color of man's skin  
That counts with God : it is man's worth.

The prejudice, the hate, the strife  
Among the races—should it be ?  
Why can we not in this brief life  
Together dwell in unity ?

Brown, red and yellow, white and black,  
We are the sons and daughters of  
One God : and yet how much we lack  
Of brotherly regard and love.

*In Reply to Ella Wheeler Wilcox's, "A Query."*

It matters not if one's a Jew,  
 A Buddhist, skeptic or Gentile.  
 If he acts rightly and is true  
 To his own self, God then will smile  
 Approvingly upon him. Yes,  
 The conscience is a truer guide  
 Than creeds and sects. The poetess  
 Is right. How many men have died  
 Unhappy, dreadful deaths, because  
 Of having 'mid the world's mad strife  
 Broken, alas! some churchly laws  
 For which a God in some new life  
 Shall smite and punish them. Is He  
 So cruel? O! how few men know  
 That God is love. There cannot be  
 A future life of endless woe.

---

## THE DEAD.

"Pray for his soul"—This strange request  
 I read once on a sign beside  
 A church; but the dead are at rest,  
 Why pray, then, for men who have died?  
  
 Dead souls or dead men, The Book shows,  
 Know nothing: needless are the prayers  
 So often made for their repose.  
 The dead! Ah! God's great peace is theirs.  
  
 I now would hate, yes, hate to feel  
 That, after I have passed away,  
 Some one, though meaning well, would kneel  
 And for my rest and comfort pray.

*(Respectfully dedicated to W. E. Henley.)*

“ There’s a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them how we will.”—Shakespeare.

“ I am the master of my fate ”—a most  
Audacious vaunting, Henley. Who is he  
Who can unaided breast life’s storms? Your boast  
Smacks of irreverence to gods that be.

Weak, puny man! What, he the captain of  
A soul of which Fate wantonly makes sport!  
Upon our little earthly hills we love  
To crow, but ah! it signifieth nought.

Prescribed has been the course of every star;  
The universe is ruled by law. Would we  
Accomplish what we do unless we are  
Helped in some way by a divinity?

---

### LIFE’S BATTLE.

Inherited defects and habits—these  
Influence us; environment also,  
And early training shape our destinies;  
Against our will they drive us to and fro.

Unless help comes the strongest spirits must  
Yield to these forces; yet men think it shows  
A weakness to seek aid of Him—the just  
And only God, whose heart with love o’erflows.

“On her white breast a sparkling cross she wore,  
Which Jews might kiss and infidels adore.”—Pope.

Personal bedizenment,  
Since earth greeted Eve's advent,  
Has been femininity's  
Chief joy through the centuries.  
With a zest untiring  
Woman glories in this thing.  
Is it wrong? Ah! who may judge?  
Who of earth's sons would begrudge  
Even the minutest gem  
In a woman's diadem?  
Once the sterner portion of  
Humankind evinced a love  
For adornment; once the strong  
And the brave thought it no wrong  
To bedeck with gilded charms  
Their necks, breasts, ears, hands and arms;  
Thus arrayed men trod life's ways  
Proudly in primeval days.  
Time brings changes; man adores  
No more these once prized gewgaws;  
He renounces all such things—  
All save studs, pins, chains and rings.  
He who to old customs clings  
On his fingers may place rings,  
Or upon his shirt front wear  
Brilliant studs that flash and glare;  
Or he might, if he thinks best,  
Hang a chain across his vest;  
Or display, 'twould be no sin,  
On his tie a diamond pin.  
But these days man should not try  
To exploit those things that lie  
In a woman's realm. Who dares  
Covet any gem she wears?  
The world's gorgeous finery  
Looks best on a woman; she,

As men happily have found,  
 Should with brightest gems be crowned;  
 It were meet that she should deck  
 Her ears, waist, wrists, head, arms, neck,  
 With earth's rarest jewels; these  
 Decorative vanities  
 Are for her alone; 'tis clear  
 Man's renunciation here  
 Shows the sturdy fibre of  
 His strong nature. Woman's love  
 For bedazzling trinketry  
 Is too great a love to be  
 Overcome; hence then the fair,  
 Not the brave, earth's gems should wear.  
 Woman should—yes, should alone  
 Wear the necklace, bracelet, zone,  
 The tiara and the clear  
 Sparkling pendant on the ear;  
 And the brooch ah! that should rest  
 Only on a woman's breast.  
 A brooch is a priceless thing  
 When it thus lies fluttering  
 On a bosom fair; the brave,  
 Who behold it, may then rave,  
 And in ecstasy enthuse  
 O'er a gem's prismatic hues.  
 Yes, while the brooch flutters there,  
 Men—all men—may breathe a prayer.

— — —

## A GEM.

One cannot at a single bound  
 Attain paradise, as I've found.  
     This thought is a gem:  
     It has, yes, a-hem!  
 A real Tennysonian sound.

Shining jewels of great worth  
Deck the daughters of the earth.  
Yet not only are the fair  
Thus adorned with gems most rare,  
But some men appear to be  
Just as fond of jewelry;  
Diamond studs and golden bands  
Glitter on their shirts and hands.  
'Tis a pleasure to behold  
Priceless stones well set in gold.  
When those stones, so rich and rare,  
Sparkle on a woman fair  
Our pleasure is increased  
A full hundredfold at least.  
Earrings, bracelets, brooches, rings,  
Chains, tiaras—all such things  
Look well on young maids, but these  
Feminine necessities  
Are not meant for men; the fair,  
Not the brave, such things should wear.  
For the pearls that women love  
Let men search the dank beds of  
Distant seas; let men go down  
Into mines for stones to crown  
Womankind. Yes, let man's brow  
Sweat for woman's joy. Ah! thou  
Art, O woman, the world's pride;  
Nought to thee can be denied.  
Yet of greater worth by far  
Than such glistening baubles are  
Other jewels—those that shine  
With a radiance divine;  
And those jewels, though so rare,  
Men, all men on earth may wear.  
They're the jewels God hath sent—  
Truth, peace, love and sweet content.  
Truth, peace, love, contentment—yes,  
Bring the truest happiness.  
How can men and women find  
These blest jewels of the mind?  
Search aright and everywhere



May be found these jewels rare.  
Oft on lonely mountain peaks,  
Far from the world's crowds, one seeks  
Peace and happiness and rest;  
Vain, however, is the quest.  
Living from the world apart  
Chills life's current in the heart.  
'Tis not on some fairy isle  
Brightened by a sea nymph's smile,  
Nor in quiet valleys where  
Nature seems most kind and fair,  
Nor in cloisters where the sound  
Of the rude world's woes is drowned,  
Nor beside the margin of  
A calm lake that peace and love  
Are more likely to be gained.  
No, God's jewels are obtained  
Everywhere; one need not roam  
O'er the sea, afar from home,  
For these blessings; one may win  
Them amid the city's din,  
Working in the ranks of men,  
With the pick, the spade, the pen.  
If one did but rightly look  
In the cities one forsook,  
One might at his very door  
Have found these things he sought for—  
Have found peace. Peace. O! what bliss  
'Tis to have a gem like this.  
All who live and act aright  
May secure this jewel bright  
And be rich; ah! richer than  
Any scoffer ever can.  
Live and act aright. A clear  
Conscience makes this life so dear.  
Serving God and helping man  
Is the best, the only plan  
For mankind to gain and hold  
Gems of greater worth than gold.  
Scoffers at things sacred ne'er  
Find on earth these jewels rare.

My soul has been haunted ever—  
 Strangely haunted through the years  
 By the music of the spheres,  
 Heard when God's stars sang together.

O that morning so auspicious  
 When my soul on free wings soared,  
 Thrilled then by Love's now lost chord!  
 O that music so delicious!

Shall I hear those voices blending  
 In love's anthem e'er again?  
 Yes, I know I'll hear them when  
 My life's little day is ending.

Then those sweet, faint strains that haunted  
 Me on earth I'll clearly hear:  
 Then shall I, as death draws near,  
 Face eternity undaunted.

---

WITH NATURE.

When care oppressed I flee  
 The haunts of men to be  
 With nature: to commune in some fair spot  
 With her uplifts the soul  
 Beyond the earth's control  
 Into a world where sorrow enters not.

To worship Nature is  
 To worship God, I wis.  
 At Nature's altar I, a devotee,  
 This blessed truth have felt  
 The while in prayer I knelt  
 And peace ineffable stole over me.

O! can it be that power so commanding,  
Which has the world ruled through all ages past,  
A power as yet beyond man's understanding,  
Is to illumine my checkered life at last?

Am I earth's happiest knowledge to acquire?  
Am I to quaff fair pleasure's draught divine?  
To feel from now on that life's aims are higher?  
Are nobler aspirations to be mine?

Am I in clearer tones to sing a newer  
And grander melody than e'er before?  
To know a deeper truth? To gain a truer  
And larger idea of love's mystic lore?

Nay, I am not to know now nor hereafter  
The largess of love's bounty; but outside  
The gates I'll hear, perchance, the happy laughter  
Of those who taste the joys I am denied.

So let it be. Yet there a comfort thinking  
That one familiar voice I'll sometimes hear  
In song or laugh: 'twill keep my heart from sinking  
When heaven by that voice is brought more near.

---

### LILIES.

Blooming in all their wondrous beauty now  
Under the cloudless skies, the lilies fair  
Reveal God's goodness: yes, we learn somehow  
The meaning of the flowers, and a prayer  
Of thankfulness for these new proofs of love  
Now from our hearts goes out to Him above.

## NEARING THE END.

Never, never again  
 Shall I the Muse command.  
 'The pen—the rhyming pen—  
 Has fallen from my hand.

I feel that I am near  
 My end. From earth's scenes I  
 Will shortly disappear.  
 Will men weep when I die?

Hardly. Who weeps? Not men.  
 Yet some there are who may  
 Miss me a little when  
 From life I've passed away.

---

## LOVE OR FEAR.

Is it the love of life or fear  
 Of death which causes us to take  
 A strangle hold on this life here—  
 A hold that seems so hard to break?

We cling to life tenaciously,  
 At least most of us do—but why?  
 Do we so love it? Or do we  
 Fear—actually fear to die?

---

## LIVING AGAIN.

Death, though he knocks us mortals out  
 So easily, is not, we know,  
 Invincible; there'll come a bout  
 In which he'll find himself laid low.

Laid low forever—then, ah! then  
 We who faced him and fell may rise  
 From earth's cold lap, to live again:  
 Again, again, beyond the skies!

'There'll come a time—and this to me seems queer—

When I among the living shall not be ;

That time perhaps is very, very near.

To leave earth's scenes seems—yes, seems queer to me.

There are occasions, such as now, when I

Like, really like to dwell on the idea

Of passing from the present life ; to my

Mind, though, this, as I would repeat, seems queer.

'Tis said our souls, when liberated, wing

Their flight somewhere the while, in graveyards here,

Our bodies mould. Death is a common thing.

And yet to live no more seems—yes, seems queer.

To die ! I contemplate, let me confess,

Man's debt to nature with—well, with no fear.

To lie, however, cold and motionless

Does, as I would again remark, seem queer.

### LIFE'S UNCERTAINTY.

If some grave soothsayer declared

He could foretell just when I'd die,

He would not have me greatly scared,

For I would know he did but lie.

Still should some sage state solemnly

That I would die this very night,

Why question his veracity?

Might he not prophesy aright?

I may, of course, die before night,

Or I—who knows?—may live for years.

In either case, though, 'twere but right

To be prepared when death appears.

If I were told by some one who  
 Would know (yet who could know?) that I  
 Had two days more to live—just two,  
 What would I do before I die?

Would I be frightened as my end  
 Drew near? Would I in terror throw  
 Myself on quaking knees, and spend  
 Those two days thus? I don't think so.

Yet might I not? Death is, in fact,  
 A dreadful thought on which to dwell.  
 What I shall do, how I shall act  
 When facing death, I can not tell.

My courage, now so great, might fail  
 Me when my time comes. Why assume  
 I would be brave? My soul might quail  
 Within the shadow of the tomb.

And yet the thought of death, I find,  
 Is not unpleasing—not a bit;  
 Though I'm not morbidly inclined,  
 I like at times to dwell on it.

Against stern Fate I have no grouch.  
 My grave I shall approach "like one  
 Who wraps the drapery of his couch  
 'Bout him, and lies down"—when day's done.

---

### SHALL WE E'ER KNOW?

Life is—but ah! who knows? To try  
 To solve the problem would be vain;  
 When I the secret find then I—  
 No, in the grave who can explain?

The very wisest man can throw  
 But little light on things like these—  
 On life, death, love. Shall we e'er know  
 All, *all* about such mysteries?



I would that I had lived—well, say  
One hundred years ago ;  
For if I had, I would today  
Be happier, I know.

But I am fifty now, and in  
A hundred years—aye, less  
Than half that time perhaps I'll win  
My right to happiness.

Yes, I am fifty, and therefore  
I have no cause to be  
Unhappy. My life will be o'er  
Soon in this century.

The joy of peace! the joy of rest!  
These are the joys I crave ;  
And I shall find them in that blest  
And deep sleep in the grave.

---

#### ENCOURAGEMENT.

In the far future there may be  
A wondrous world wherein we weak  
Work-weary wights will win what we  
In the life here so vainly seek.

This thought is most encouraging.  
One might despair if it were not  
For those thoughts that cause us to sing  
And be contented with our lot.

---

#### WHY WAIT?

They say "it's ne'er too late to mend."  
But why wait until near life's end  
Before we behave?  
We're now nearer the grave  
Than we're apt to think, my dear friend.



When one's honest and means well—yes, when  
One is true and sincere and has got  
A bright cheerful nature, ah! then  
The world's dogmas and creeds matter not.

Why waste time in exploiting beliefs  
That are mystic and weird and unsound?  
In grappling with the world's griefs  
Character's the best staff to be found.

The surest support in one's need  
Is to feel that one has acted right.  
When heavily leant on, a creed  
Oft snaps—then most sad is one's plight.

The dead are at rest—it is we  
That live who must suffer and fight;  
And yet no one of us need be  
Discouraged if he but acts right.

---

#### NO MORE OF DEATH.

No more of death! I mean no more  
Thoughts on the subject for a while.  
I should choose things best fitted for  
My readers—things to make them smile.

I'd like to make men laugh until  
They all were fairly out of breath.  
To do so, though, I no doubt will  
Have to choose themes less sad than death.

Yet oft when I on death dilate,  
My dirges and my elegies  
Seem to excite, I grieve to state,  
Some reader's risibilities.

Men, some men, of a certain trend of mind,  
 Are, so they tell us, much concerned about  
 Social conditions; these men would blot out  
 From our statute-books those laws they find  
 [O! no, they have no common axe to grind!]  
 Which safeguard individual rights. They spout  
 Their sophistries upon the street, while stout  
 Sons of true labor, those of thriftier kind,  
 Work on with faith in God and faith also  
 In our dear country's institutions. These  
 Real workers in the shops, mines, factories,  
 At desks, at looms, at forges, harbor no  
 Envy of others; free through life they go,  
 Thankful for all its possibilities.

---

### MODERN RELIGIOUS CULTS.

*(Respectfully dedicated to that large and irresponsible body of  
 self-constituted preceptors in advanced spiritual theorizing.)*

"New Thought", "Man's Brotherhood"—such phrases fill  
 The mouths of ideologists these days.  
 "The Brotherhood of Man"—a sounding phrase,  
 Implying, as it does, love and good will  
 Among earth's dwellers. Whose heart does not thrill  
 At the fair prospect! Worthy of all praise  
 Are those who with a rightful purpose blaze  
 A new way towards life's dazzling summits; still  
 Should we forsake the beaten pathways? Ought  
 We follow these late day evangels so  
 Confidingly and blindly? Do they know  
 More than the olden prophets? This "New Thought"  
 May fail us in the battle being fought;  
 The ancient faiths the truer way may show.

Men, generally speaking, are vile;  
The world teems with greed, graft and guile;  
    Notwithstanding its sin,  
    Though, it's worth living in.  
I don't care to die yet awhile.

Of course I'm appalled oftentimes  
By outbreaks of violent crimes.  
    Is the fault mine? Not quite.  
    People will sin in spite  
Of all my best efforts and—rhymes.

A helplessness in this regard  
Need, however, not worry a bard.  
    When a Tolstoy fails to  
    Reform the world, who  
Could expect one like me to try hard.

Why not be light-hearted and gay?  
So long as griefs come not my way,  
    I'll on life's primrose path  
    Stroll along with a laugh.  
I mean to enjoy life's brief day.

Am I selfish? Ah! well, some who read  
'Tween these lines may find a heart can bleed  
    For the woes of mankind.  
    Yes, a poor rhymster's mind  
May feel for the race in its need.

The fact is that in this life few  
Can parry Fate's cuffs; but who  
    Is called on to assume  
    A demeanor of gloom?  
Laugh. Yes. What good does wailing do?

A wealthy patrician may don  
The coarse cotton garb of a son  
    Of toil; and may pose  
    On the fields in such clothes,  
But what good by such stunts can be won?

The point I would make in this case  
Is that no one can ever efface  
    By methods bizarre  
    The vices that are  
Ingrained in the woof of our race.

Ah! when a poet hears the clear  
And thrilling voice of conscience he  
Should cast aside unworthy fear,  
And in Truth's cause fight valiantly.

The world at first may scout him, but  
In time his fight with it he'll win;  
Yes, he'll uplift it from the rut  
It has unconsciously been in.

The songs of an inspired bard  
Re-echoing among the spheres  
Will win the world; though long and hard  
The siege may be, yet Truth's day nears.

A poet with a message, then,  
Should give it to the world; it may  
Not absolutely please all men,  
But Duty's call bards must obey.

---

## SOME DAY I'LL KNOW.

If I have ever penned a line  
(Which, possibly, I might have done)  
That brought some sparkle of sunshine  
Into the life of any one,

Then, then—yes then the angel who  
Records our earthly doings may  
Have noticed it, and placed it to  
My credit. This I'll know some day.

A CORRESPONDENT'S CONTRIBUTION  
TO CONTROVERSIAL COLUMNS.

In days remote some misty matter, then in space a-sailing,  
Was drawn together in a gaseous globe which through the clear  
Empyrean revolved, but God's or nature's law prevailing,  
The heated mass became in time a habitable sphere.

Earth's fires through the ages cooled, the vaporous steam emitted  
Descended in torrential rains, the mists to water turned;  
Then finally the solid land appeared and earth was fitted  
For life—fish first, then birds, then beasts, then man, as we  
have learned.

The Rev'rend Henry Losch, as "Critic" says, is a true poet;  
As a Bible exegetist, though, he's apt to err, I fear.  
The waters, so states Genesis (strange that Losch doesn't know it)  
Covered all of earth long, long before the dry land did appear.

The nebular hypothesis by Doctor Losch is scouted;  
Yet this doctrine of creation in no manner removes God  
From the fair world we live in; no sane man has ever doubted  
That He made it; we believe this as well as the Reverend Bard.

While I can't accept friend Losch's scientific theorizing,  
Yet, like "Critic," I must praise him for the daring way he  
soars

In proud Poesy's dominions; yes, it is indeed surprising  
How complacently he disregards convention's irksome laws.

It is only the Walt Whitmans and the Losches and such mortals  
(Ah! I should say such immortals) who can all the rules ignore;  
We poor earth-bound versifiers stand awestricken at the portals  
Watching these intrepid, fate-defying aviators soar.

---

FORGIVENESS.

Forgiveness, though good, yet spreads sin:  
It encourages grafters: men in  
Public service would be  
More pure, probably,  
If forgiveness were harder to win.

I sometimes think it well that we  
Differ in our opinions so.  
If all men thought alike would the  
World then be better? I say no.

If in religion, say, men were  
Of one mind and all of one cult,  
The State subservient to her—  
The Church—what would be the result?

Perhaps not progress; why try then  
Converting the world to our own  
Peculiar sect views? Let men  
Think for themselves; let them alone.

Help them, of course, when help they need,  
But don't dethrone the Gods of their  
Adoption, nor impose a creed  
On them for which they may not care.

Be tolerant; although we might  
Deem ours the only proper sect,  
Yet other sectists have a right  
To their views, which we should respect.

The safety, it seems to me,  
Of the creed which we hold so dear  
Lies in the multiplicity  
Of differing faiths on this earth here.

A wholesome check they exercise  
On one another's temporal bent;  
Hence none of them dare aggrandize  
Itself to the world's detriment.

Which of the creeds is really best  
Depends upon the point of view;  
Each one no doubt can stand the test  
Its votaries subject it to.



I speak with deep respect of each  
And every creed ; but, after all,  
The things we do, not forms we teach,  
Count most and fit us for Death's call.

## POSTSCRIPT.

Perhaps some one might smile who reads  
These lines ; unconsciously I may  
Have dogmatized upon the creeds.  
My feelings carried me away.

But one's views of old creeds don't cause  
Ill feeling these days ; men are more  
Tolerant now, and " holy " wars  
Are happily forever o'er.

Men are, so I find, better than  
Some of the creeds to which they hold.  
A man loves now his brother man  
More truly than in days of old.

Surely no gentle reader need  
Take umbrage at the thoughts I've penned.  
If I seemed to impugn a creed,  
To those who hold it I'm a friend.

Life—let me say this—is so short  
And so uncertain ; should not we  
Strive here to make, I think we ought,  
Ourselves fit for eternity?

I've made some friends, perhaps some foes,  
In life. Life! Mine will soon be done ;  
I'm glad to feel now, near its close,  
So kindly, yes, towards every one.



Certain opinions I've expressed  
 In verse form may be wrong, but then  
 Should I refrain from rhyming lest  
 What I may say offend some men?

On morals, on philosophy,  
 On politics, religion too,  
 I am not an authority;  
 Yet I at times these things review.

Some call me bold, others accuse  
 Me of schismatic scheming; yes,  
 They tell me to abjure the Muse;  
 My poor mild rhymes they would suppress.

I have been told, in point of fact,  
 That my views are unorthodox,  
 And that if I'm not more *exact*  
 I'll founder some day on Time's rocks.

But on life's seas each one must guide  
 His barque as seemeth right and well.  
 Is mine to "founder" or to ride  
 The billows safely? Who can tell?

I hold one cannot go astray  
 Who (this remark, though, may seem trite)  
 Tries sedulously to obey  
 The voice of conscience. Am I right?

I may be wrong; to win divine  
 Preferment, it is said, one needs  
 More copious rituals than mine,  
 And also more elaborate creeds.

My doxy's not the one held by  
 My censors; so they (is this square?)  
 Charge me with heterodoxy. I  
 Believe the charge to be unfair.

A simple faith accompanied by  
 Good deeds avails not. God delights  
 In certain dogmas, cut and dry,  
 And forms, and ceremonial rites.

Such things do not appeal to me;  
 Hence my poor soul, so some declare,  
 Will not be saved—which, certainly,  
 Is quite a serious affair.

Those mighty tweedles—dum and dee—  
 I cannot differentiate.  
 Let experts in theology  
 On matters great as these dilate.

I would a quiet life pursue,  
 Free from ecclesiastic scraps  
 O'er doctrines strange and weird, that few  
 Or none can understand perhaps.

Ghostly conception! Trinity!  
 Three Gods—yet one! Ah, what's the use?  
 These studies are too deep for me,  
 Or else it is I'm too obtuse.

At times it's interesting to  
 Discuss these doctrines con and pro;  
 We can't all be convinced they're true,  
 For men, as we know, differ so.

Let no one in his fervor, though,  
 Become intolerant and feel  
 Himself called on to damn his foe;  
 This I would style mistaken zeal.

Who fears anathemas? To scold  
 And damn men does not change their views.  
 Those stronger means employed of old—  
 The rack and stake—we may not use.

I do not speak in rancor here  
 Of sect enthusiasts; I would  
 Merely observe no one need fear  
 The future who tries to be good.

Those who discover and spread truths are no  
 More jailed and racked and burnt. The Church and State  
 Are in most lands dissevered; men of late  
 Have become free; the fires that burnt Bruno  
 And other martyrs have long ceased to glow.  
 No state again dare lend its power and weight  
 To sects that would revive a smouldering hate.  
 Upon poor Joan of Arc we now bestow  
 A tardy, empty *honor*! Should not we  
 Also beatify brave Bruno, who  
 Likewise was murdered? No, those whom we slew  
 And tortured in the past should be left free  
 To rest. Peace to their honored memory.  
 What good now can our petty church-rites do?

---

## NO JOKE.

Is life a joke? Well, hardly so.  
 Are they who laugh and they who jest  
 The happiest? Not always. No,  
 Grievs come to them as to the rest.

The peasant, pauper, millionaire,  
 The soldier, statesman, lover, thief,  
 The upright man—none's free from care;  
 All who have lived have known grief.

If life's a tragedy—then what?  
 We may therein an interest take,  
 And weep at times—laugh too. Why not,  
 Ere we therefrom our exit make?

Critics can never undermine  
 Or shake a right belief. Why fear  
 To have them study that divine  
 Book which all worthy men hold dear?

Let those who wish, investigate  
 The Holy Bible. Ah! I know  
 The truths therein are far too great  
 For any one to overthrow.

But no one means, of this I'm sure,  
 To chill our faith. That faith, at best,  
 Is very frail and insecure  
 Which cannot weather every test.

Scholars familiar with the Greek,  
 Hebrew and Latin tongues may be  
 Entrusted, so I think, to seek  
 For more light on life's mystery.

My plummet is too short to sound  
 The depths of this strange Book, and I  
 Upon those students of profound  
 Learning and knowledge must rely.

I welcome, then, (why should I dread?)  
 Those who expose the errors of  
 Old and false teaching, and who shed  
 New light on God's truths and God's love.

---

#### TOLERATION.

*A necessary plea for a most gracious quality, which is not as all-pervading among mankind as it should be in this enlightened twentieth century.*

To men unbiased, those whose free  
 Minds are by no traditions swayed,  
 We might be kinder. Why should we  
 Of these truth-seekers be afraid?

A woman should forever and a day  
 Be true to him to whom, when she is wed,  
 She vows to love and honor and obey  
 Until the man or she herself is dead.

But (yes, there is a But with a big B)  
 When the man treats her ill, neglects her—when  
 He lives with other women, drinks, when he—  
 Drunken or sober—beats her, then—what then?

Then, then, yes, then she should not live a day,  
 Much less forever, with this worst of brutes.  
 Divorce him; 'twould be criminal to stay  
 With him and breath the air which he pollutes.

---

MAN'S PART.

When wives act wrongly (which, of course, few do)  
 When love illicit lures them, when they drink,  
 And otherwise transgress, the husbands who  
 Divorce them act ungallantly, I think.

Women are weak but men are—ah! well, strong  
 Enough to keep the marriage vows they make.  
 Whate'er the provocation or the wrong,  
 It were unmanly wedlock's bonds to break.

Man should protect the woman who is weak:  
 Condone her sins; yes, if a wife should err,  
 A true man should not murmur, should not seek  
 Divorce: he still should cherish, still love her.

ENVOY.

Ah! why suppose that through the lines above  
 There runs a vein of satire? Am I  
 Not able to cognize that higher love  
 Which some men feel—a love that cannot die?

I'll make a man of straw and when  
I've done so I'll at once proceed  
To knock him out ; the world may then  
Think I have done a valiant deed.

By such slick means one easily  
Achieves success ; a man who hopes  
For fame will win it soon if he  
Rightly manipulates the ropes.

Yes, mediocre men may score—  
I've known it done—success and fame  
By setting up a man of straw  
And boldly knocking out the same.

---

## LIFE'S WAYS.

Whene'er before me there lie two  
Diverging courses I, it seems,  
Know not which one I should pursue ;  
I can't decide between extremes.

Still when before me two paths loom  
Portentously, I need not care  
Which one I choose ; I'll reach the tomb  
By either path—all paths lead there.

True, at a grave all life-roads end ;  
Nevertheless, before we rest  
From our wanderings, let us wend  
The ways that seem to us the best.

The best, the best—not those that we  
Find easiest, but those pathways  
Duty points out ; although they be  
The roughest, we'll walk them these days.

It matters not, some say, how we  
Conduct ourselves now and behave,  
For in less than a century  
Each of us will be in his grave.

These sophists overlook some facts.  
For instance, what is done and said  
By us whilst here—our words and acts—  
May bear fruit after we are dead.

We should, on learning this, commence  
To turn over a newer leaf,  
Or else our acts might, centuries hence,  
Bring some poor struggling soul to grief.

Ah! by our wrongful conduct we  
May suffer too—sometime! To earn  
True joy through all eternity  
We should, then, a new leaf o'erturn.

---

### SOWING AND REAPING.

An effect follows a cause;  
None disputes this, hence if we  
Transgress one of nature's laws,  
We must pay the penalty.

If we sow wild oats in youth  
We in later years shall find  
Sad results therefrom: this truth  
'Twould be well to bear in mind.

We may, on the other hand,  
Act [for cause precedes effect]  
In youth so as to command  
Later on the world's respect.

We may make the deserts glow  
With rare verdure if—but I'm  
Getting tiresome, and so  
I must stop this prosy rhyme.



Professional revivalists

Point, with a pardonable pride,  
To many new names on their lists  
Of the elect and sanctified.

How quickly made are most converts!

Does reason sway them? Who may tell?  
Perhaps an exhorter exerts  
O'er some men a hypnotic spell.

It has been said that reformed rakes  
Make the best husbands; a girl, though,  
Who weds one of them surely takes  
A great risk—at least, I think so.

Converted sinners oft "backslide";  
Although helped by some power divine,  
They lack, this cannot be denied,  
The strength to walk on a straight line.

I must admit that my belief  
In these "conversions" is not strong;  
A "redeemed" crook or "reclaimed" thief  
Cannot, I think, remain good long.

One whose delinquencies were less—  
A reformed debauchee—may be  
Best trusted; a girl's happiness  
With him is safe, most probably.

Yet I am dubious somewhat.  
A habit, tendency or trait  
Of any kind I know is not  
An easy thing to extirpate.

Therefore when jaded roués grow  
Aweary of those haunts of theirs,  
Women—good women—should place no  
Reliance on their vows and prayers.

My views may seem harsh, yet I do  
Not wish in any wise to shake  
A girl's faith in her power to  
Always keep straight a reformed rake.

*Smoking is permitted in The Man's Church (as it is called) in Atlantic City, and the writer is informed that many who attend the services avail themselves of the smoking privilege. This innovation in church ethics has suggested these verses.*

A man who cannot put aside his pipe  
Or his cigar or cigarette the while  
He worships his Creator, is a type  
Of humankind which must make Satan smile.

Why, in some playhouses devoted to  
Burlesque performances, whose patrons are  
Exclusively male bipeds, one may chew  
And spit, but one must not smoke a cigar.

Yet here on Sabbath morns, within the walls  
Of this church by the sea, there may be seen,  
Dimly through thick tobacco haze, the thralls  
Of Alcohol's twin sister—Nicotine.

Mohammedans, whom we so criticise,  
E'er entering their mosques, remove their shoes.  
Strange people! Yes, yet probably as wise  
As those of us who lounge and smoke in pews.

Men who are wont to smoke and chew and drink  
Can find time outside sanctuaries to  
Indulge their tastes; they should refrain, I think,  
From such things while they occupy a pew.

I do not say that smoking is a sin,  
But men at church—if I might give advice—  
Should not, during the service, indulge in  
A habit which is—well, not overnice.

Am I too captious? Maybe so, and yet  
I must say there are certain places where  
Men should show God respect; a cigarette  
Should not be lighted in a house of prayer.

Upon the street, in dining-rooms, in cars,  
Blowing their fumes in everybody's face,  
Let men puff cigarettes, pipes and cigars;  
But in a *church* smoking seems out of place.

Do laws prevent crime? No, not much.  
 Do sermons? No. Does force suffice?  
 Or moral suasion? Can I crush  
 Out by my rhyme all forms of vice?

No, I can ne'er do this; the three  
 Worst vices that afflict and curse  
 The modern world can never be  
 Wiped off earth's surface by my verse.

So 'gainst the dram-shop, gambling-den  
 And the house of bad morals I'll  
 Say nought; at rhythmic screeds the men  
 Who frequent such haunts would but smile.

Yes, rhyme in general [my rhyme in  
 Particular] is weak, and so  
 Lyric Philippics against sin  
 Would be most futile, as I know.

Hence I shall not excoriate  
 The evils of the day, nor chide  
 The drinker, gamester, profligate,  
 In verses which they would deride.

Against this active trio, then,  
 Which upholds vice so ably, I'll  
 Say nought; to lash vice with a pen—  
 A rhythmic pen—seems not worth while.

It is not that I really fear  
 The amused smiles, or the abuse—  
 An oath perhaps, maybe a sneer—  
 From those I rile—but what's the use?

Perhaps I may be able to  
 Write more effective verse sometime;  
 If so, I'll try what I can do  
 Towards ridding this world of its crime.

But as no bards have yet, we know,  
 Reformed the world by aught they wrote,  
 The chances of my doing so  
 Appear exceedingly remote.

Once in the senate hall some one  
Cried out "What has posterity  
E'er done for us!" Well, it has done  
More than this flippant wit could see.

The annals of our race disclose  
Great deeds performed by mortals who  
Hoped for posthumous fame; this shows  
Us what posterity may do.

Men, ere they die, toil hard and save  
For others—to provide for them  
Makes men unselfish, kind and brave.  
Should we such qualities condemn?

So to these others who draw out  
Our greatest virtues, are not we  
Beholden? Yes, there is no doubt,  
We owe much to posterity.

To work for our dear ones who  
Outlive us, and also for their  
Descendants, is to add unto  
The world's wealth and our own welfare.

Our words influence those who may  
Survive us; thoughts we launch may roll  
Along the years till time's last day.  
Do not these facts spur now one's soul?

Men who have yet to tread life's ways  
May bless us for our words of cheer.  
Surely this knowledge makes these days,  
Which we now live, more bright and dear.

Posterity! Those friends that are  
As yet unborn! Ah! that day when  
We meet on a fair, distant star  
We'll thank them—yes, we'll thank them *then*.

The wickedest are the most cowardly;  
 Their impulse to be good when death draws near  
 May be due to contrition, or may be  
 But the result of an all sudden fear.

Death-bed repentances do not impress  
 Me very greatly: if they be sincere,  
 'Twould seem those who are steeped in wickedness  
 Are surest of God's love after life here.

The man who sins—magnificently sins,  
 Who in his brother's blood imbrues his hands,  
 Is he who at the close of this life wins  
 A sure passport to Eden's fairest lands:

After his last (perhaps his first) real prayer  
 The murderer—saved and redeemed by grace—  
 Goes from the gallows or electric chair  
 Straightway into a loving God's embrace.

But we whose lives are uneventful, we  
 Who do no mighty crimes, we men who try  
 To act aright, face less assuringly  
 That unknown future when we come to die.

If I had done some murdering instead  
 Of rhyming I might be more sure these days  
 Of that hereafter which most mortals dread,  
 While women would be sending me bouquets!

Fresh flowery favors from fond female friends  
 And perfumed notes are not for him who woos  
 The gentle Muse, but for the one who ends  
 His crime-crammed career in a calaboose.

\* \* \* \* \*

Let not my words rob malefactors of  
 The joy they find in thinking God will save  
 Their sinful souls; we all need God's great love—  
 We all are on our way now to the grave.

Surely I grudge no wretch condemned to die  
 That rapture, bliss and glory which, it seems,  
 He will in heaven know: I but ask why  
 We lesser sinners may not dream such dreams!

We who can not accept the doctrines taught  
 By certain masters of theology  
 Will have no standing in that higher court  
 Which seals our doom for all eternity.

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### A SOCIALIST.

Private property is wrong, the State certainly should seize  
 It for us proletarians; this would be best I'm sure.  
 The State could then support us, we could do just as we please;  
 We all would then be equal, there would be no rich nor poor.

We would not have to work then, for the State could well afford,  
 With confiscated coin from erstwhile bloated millionaires,  
 To amuse us, clothe us, see to our lodging and our board;  
 The State would run the trolleys; we'd ride then and pay no fares.

Each man could have an aeroplane, a yacht and motor-car;  
 I would summer at Bar Harbor, or possibly I might  
 Prefer to hang around a nearer, dearer, different bar;  
 There's one downtown whose cocktails are to me a pure delight.

I love a certain woman; no, I do not mean my wife,  
 But the fair spouse of a neighbor who lives some doors above;  
 She's my Socialistic soulmate, my affinity, my life;  
 We both look for the dawning of the era of free love.

While the coffers of the State with the coin were nicely lined,  
 And those humanitarians, who are to us so good,  
 Would hand us daily our portion of the swag, you'd find  
 That I would prove most loyal to the glorious Brotherhood.

Should men of capital protest when our order swipes  
 Their property, we'll clap them, every mother's son, in jail.  
 When the Socialists' Proud Banner floats o'er the stars and stripes,  
 I at that joint downtown shall gulp full many a gin cocktail.



*This term, so frequently exploited by the Socialists, has suggested these lines as likely to prove a befitting battle song for the Socialistic brethren.*

Humanity! That is the word which gives us such delight;  
 We dearly love to harp on it—we of The Brotherhood.  
 Our individuality we sink clean out of sight;  
 Our one concern in life is to promote the general good.

Humanity! We'll shout that word until our throats are hoarse.  
 The shibboleth's a dandy one, and often it has stood  
 Us in good stead when stringing the dear public—er—of course  
 I mean when pleading for our cause, the—er—yes, general good.

Humanity! 'Tis glorious to—er—expatiate  
 On love for one's own kind, ah yes! and thrifty workers should  
 Be social and hand over all their savings to the State,  
 'Tis sweet to sacrifice oneself thus—for the general good!

Humanity! A cause so great should make us brave and bold;  
 We'll crush those monsters who own property, indeed we would  
 Wade to our waists in plutocratic gore if we were told  
 That doing so would but subserve the—er—yes, general good

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### ABOLISHING LIFE'S EVILS.

Men talk about abolishing  
 War, murder, vice, all kinds of crime.  
 Well, this would be a blessed thing;  
 But 'twill take time, yes, 'twill take time.



A Socialist declares that his  
Especial theory really is  
Unlike the one held by those who  
Are Anarchists—but is this true?  
They seem dissimilar I know,  
Yes, “diametrically” so,  
As is oft said; but the result  
Gained by adopting either cult  
Would be the same. To Anarchy  
True Socialism tends. Let’s see.  
Both Socialists and Anarchists  
Are properly placed on the lists  
Of our land’s malignant foes;  
’Tis hard to tell just which one shows  
The greater hatred for the grand  
Old flag that still waves o’er our land.  
I’ve heard the speakers of each sect  
Rant in our halls; in one respect  
These speakers are alike; they vie  
With one another to decry  
This our Republic, in which we  
Have equal opportunity  
To strive for life’s joys; yes, this gem  
Of all republics they condemn.  
Our institutions they assail;  
At law and virtue they both rail;  
Against our homes and charities,  
Our morals, wealth, and industries,  
And everything that we hold dear,  
These envious ones have but a sneer.  
“Let’s from the map obliterate  
“The Government we loathe and hate,”  
Thus says the Anarchist. “Agreed,”

Replies the Socialist, "we'll need  
"Some centralized strong power then  
"To run all business and rule men;  
"This power—the State—to all who may  
"Its philanthropic rules obey,  
"Is bound to make life better than  
"All other systems ever can."  
"Not so, not so, my good friend," here  
Breaks in the Anarchist, "it's clear \*  
That while your social views are nice  
Yet they will scarcely, sir, suffice.  
I'd like the State to pamper me,  
But I prefer full liberty—  
Full license, if you'd have it so;  
I would be free to come and go.  
State pampering would weary me,  
I would be absolutely free.  
I, as is every anarchist,  
Am a true individualist.  
To serve the State, sir, for the good  
Of our common brotherhood  
Is nice, O! yes, but excuse me,  
I for myself want liberty.  
I wish to be as free as air,  
And I am sure I could not bear  
The restraints of the State; I trow  
I'd not be then as free as now.  
But, really, if men would obey  
The State, as you, sir, think they may,  
Why could they not live, one and all,

\* It should be remarked that from this point to the end of the poem it is the philosophic anarchist who is holding forth; it is his views, not the writer's, which herein are being given.

Free from its constant beck and call?  
In time the kind, paternal State  
May grow despotically great.  
E'en in small homes things don't go well  
At times, and children oft rebel.  
Will unity be the outcome  
Of your large Socialistic home?  
Compliance—for the general good—  
With the State's kindly orders would  
Be grand and noble—quite so, still  
Obeying just one's own sweet will  
Seems easier ; yes, Anarchy  
Is practicable, as you see.  
Your system, though sustained by strong  
And new-made laws, would not last long.  
You scoff at patriotism, while  
You look for (and this makes me smile)  
Obedience and love and all  
True loyalty from every thrall  
In your Great Commonwealth, so called,  
When finally it is installed.  
To formulate and to enforce  
Your social laws will take of course  
A host of statesmen learn'd in law,  
A vast constabulary corps,  
Armies of clerks, and also hosts  
Of office-holders to fill posts.  
All this, as I'm free to infer,  
Will somewhat tax your exchequer.  
To help her wards the State, I'm sure,  
Must in some way the means procure.  
Now our demands, sir, will be great ;  
This might impoverish the State.

It would be awkward, 'pon my soul,  
To put the dear State in a hole.  
'Tis true, your sect will run the mint,  
And turn out money without stint,  
But foreigners with whom you deal,  
As deal you must, perhaps won't feel  
Like trusting you; yes, they may doubt  
The worth of that coin you turn out;  
Your fiat funds they may refuse,  
Thus the world's credit you will lose.  
This possibly might wound your pride,  
You would feel mildly mortified.  
Then will your theory, so fine-spun,  
Abolish graft, which we all shun?  
I doubt it. No, take it from me,  
You can't uproot cupidity  
From human hearts, sir, by a scheme  
Of making Law a god supreme.  
Why e'en the gods that seem to be  
Fail to check immorality.  
I don't like gods, and I deplore  
The deifying of the law.  
Your centralized Bureaucracy  
In no wise, sir, appeals to me.  
Still go ahead and make the law  
(Which I confess, sir, I abhor)  
Obnoxious to the world, and you  
Will most unquestionably do  
Me a great service, for you know  
Obnoxious things in time must go.  
My aim in life (yours too, I trust,)  
Is to wipe law from off earth's crust;  
Your method, though more indirect

Than mine, may prove of some effect.  
My nature's frank ; guile and deceit  
I do not like, yet I'm discreet ;  
Therefore your creed, my crafty friend,  
Suits me all right ; I'll gain my end  
If your strange theory you but spread  
Among mankind—so go ahead.  
We'll laugh (you doubtless in your sleeve,  
But I'll laugh loud) while fools believe  
In the Utopia (!) they'll gain  
When men of your persuasion reign.  
So go ahead, I shan't prevent  
Your onslaught on this government,  
Whose laws are (this amuses me)  
Lighter and fewer than will be  
Those of your sect when it controls  
Some ninety million human souls.  
O ! 'twill afford me a real joy  
When this Republic you destroy.  
When on its ruins your queer sect  
Its socialistic State erect,  
It won't be long ere men will be  
Dissatisfied, then Anarchy  
Will reign supreme. Proceed therefore  
In your attempt to make the law  
All powerful ; when law controls  
Men's businesses, and lives, and souls,  
Then Anarchy is near, my friend.  
Proceed therefore, you serve the end  
That I have long been striving for—  
Utter abolishment of law.  
This is the end I have in view,  
The Socialists but play into

My hands. Poor fools! some of them say  
 That, "diametrically", they  
 Are as a class arrayed 'gainst me.  
 The fact is they aid Anarchy.  
 You leaders know this, but not those  
 Dupes who the rank and file compose;  
 They help us though—these willing dupes—  
 In our contentions and disputes.  
 To make use of a pet word such  
 As "diametrically" much  
 Delights the rank and file when they  
 Meet their foes in a wordy fray.  
 Then, too, these dupes disseminate  
 The seeds of malice, greed and hate;  
 Without their aid it would be vain  
 To hope, as I do, for the reign  
 Of Anarchy, when Law shall be  
 Abolished and all men are free.  
 Free, aye! not wards, sir, of a State  
 But masters of themselves and fate.

---

### LIBERTY.

Liberty! Though the price of it may  
 Be great, it is worth all we pay:  
     Vigilance that ne'er nods,  
     Ne'er relaxes. Ye gods!  
 It is worth it, yes, worth it, I say.

---

### NECESSITIES.

We all mean well; justice and love  
 Most men desire; all want peace.  
 Yet the world needs its legions of  
     Priests, soldiers, watchmen and police.



*The many matrimonial compacts recently entered into by rich American girls with titled foreigners have suggested these verses.*

Another heiress soon, they say, will wed  
A proud though impecunious foreign earl.  
But who here in the States intends to shed  
A tear because we are to lose this girl?

It does, though, seem a pity to behold  
A poor, weak and misguided daughter of  
Ambitious parents thus exchange her gold  
For—what? A title—not, ah! not for love.

Not love, not love; her wealth is great, 'tis true,  
But love, the richest gift by heaven sent,  
The girl possesses not; she never knew,  
And ne'er will know, life's holiest sentiment.

Obsessed now by the thought that she sometime  
Will wear a crown, this foolish maiden would  
Yield up her body and her soul—a crime  
That shocks the moral sense of womanhood.

What will not money do! With it one may  
Procure a title from the Church or State.  
A millionaire can give his child away  
To some high lord who seeks a wealthy mate.

And priests will bless the union of the two,  
While Heaven shudders and while Hell applauds.  
The world's flesh-pots attract a motley crew;  
'Round them are found dukes, clericals and lords.

A titled son-in-law comes high, but no  
Buyer objects who can the price afford.  
The son's thrice bless'd—by Pa, by Ma, also  
By some "vicegerent", so-called, of the Lord.



This thrice-bless'd son now enters on a course  
 Of wildest living; he neglects his wife—  
 Drink, debt, debauchery, despair, divorce,  
 And death! So ends "a romance in high life".

If King George had but knocked out Washington  
 Some of us here might now be belted earls  
 And win fair brides. I'm glad, though, our George won.  
 I never cared much for tuft-hunting girls.

None of us need deplore the fact that these  
 Two sordid souls will wed; they may, you know,  
 Harness themselves in wedlock if they please;  
 She needs the title and he *needs the dough*.

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#### PROBABILITIES OF ANOTHER LIFE.

Another life, it seems to me,  
 Is likely. Time? Nay, we need more  
 Than time; we need eternity  
 To do all we are cut out for.

Still I may err; some of us do  
 A great deal in this life of time.  
 I've done myself (is this not true?)  
 Enough—yes, quite enough of rhyme.

---

#### RELIGION AND SCIENCE.

Religion and science appear  
 To mistrust each other. 'Tis queer  
 That such times when the two  
 Seem to clash, as they do,  
 Religion should show the most fear!  
 No, religion, as her acts well show,  
 Is brave. I was wrong—yes, quite so.  
 She and science agree.  
 It is theology  
 Which is timid and fearful, we know.

One night a footpad stopped me—"Sir," said he,  
 "Your money or your life"; my fright was great.  
 My life and coin are rather dear to me,  
 So I replied—"O! let us arbitrate!"

"Let us arbitrate, let us arbitrate."  
 "Not much," he answered, "if you care to live,  
 Hand out your cash; come! I've no time to wait."  
 I yielded; there was no alternative.

The crook was subsequently pinched and tried;  
 They found him guilty, I am glad to state.  
 When sentenced to be fined and jugged, he cried—  
 "O! judge, your honor, won't you arbitrate?"

"Let us arbitrate, let us arbitrate."  
 "Well, hardly," said the Judge. "I really fail  
 To see the use; I must incarcerate  
 Your corpus, for a season, in the jail."

"Here is an ode to Spring, 'tis one of those—"  
 The Editor, though taken unawares,  
 Acted with rare discretion, he uprose  
 And promptly kicked the rash bard down the stairs.

"Let us arbitrate, let us arbitrate!"  
 Thus yelled the falling poet. Ah! but who  
 Could then have helped him? 'Twas too late—too late!  
 No schemes of arbitration now would do.

They bore the shattered poet to the "Chi",  
 Where long he laid in a delirious state,  
 Raving of jocund spring, and asking why  
 It was that they refused to arbitrate.

“Let us arbitrate, let us arbitrate—”

This cry of his re-echoed through the wards.  
He spoke, too, of his soul—how it would mate  
With hers, ere long, on daisy-spangled swards.

When dreamers here, whose strange schemes work so well  
(That is, in theory), reach fair Heaven’s gate,  
And Peter tells them all to go to—well,  
Will they then say—“O! let us arbitrate?”

“Let us arbitrate, let us arbitrate!”

Their cry for arbitration won’t help though;  
The saint is firm, he will not hesitate  
To tell them all to go to—er—below.

---

### OLD THOUGHTS.

Life seems to me (and doubtless to  
Others also) most strange; the more  
I see—but these thoughts are not new;  
I’ve uttered them, I think, before.

Still there’s no harm reuttering  
Old thoughts when we’ve no new ideas.  
Life! Yes, the more I view the thing  
The more mysterious it appears.

Let me muse, therefore, o’er the old,  
Old thought—that life is strange; although  
Another life, so we are told,  
More strange than this we are to know.

That other life! Yes, it will be  
More strange than this, and far more fair.  
What happiness we’ll know when we  
Greet our loved and lost ones there!

There are visionaries who  
 Have evolved great schemes to do  
 Away with crime, work, poverty and cares.  
 All will be most lovely when  
 'Mong the world's vast hordes of men  
 The faddists introduce these schemes of theirs.

I am doubtful, though, if these  
 Social doctrinaires who please  
 The credulous among us with their schemes,  
 Can by law make all men kind,  
 True and loving. No, I find  
 An iridescent gleam about such dreams.

When one contemplates those two  
 Philosophic savants who  
 Are so unbrotherly, how can one look  
 For the promised love that will  
 Every mortal's bosom fill  
 When new and strange laws choke the statute-book?

In the far-off Northern zone  
 'Neath the Pole Star, cold and lone,  
 A Peary and a Cook could not agree;  
 Yet the faddists say when they  
 Rule the country all men may  
 Dwell then together in sweet unity!

---

#### ASSASSINS.

A speed-fiend these days in his motor-car  
 Is like a slanderer, it seems to me.  
 In what way you ask? How obtuse you are:  
 He runs men down. Dost now the likeness see?  
 Our lives and our reputations too—  
 Yes, our good names (the "jewels of the soul")  
 Are at the mercy of assassins who  
 O'er their cars and vile tongues have no control.

The rich, so some say, are all thieves,  
The poor, 'all saints—but is this true?  
I doubt if any one believes  
The statement, though some claim they do.

By trickery one cannot rise  
To any height; no cause is won  
By a resort to fraud; not lies  
But truth wins out in the long run.

Thieves are not trusted; crookedness  
Avails not; honesty in these  
Days of hard struggle brings success;  
It is the best of policies.

And yet most men are honest—why  
Do not more of us, then, succeed?  
The fact is we are rather shy  
Of other qualities we need.

Thrift, diligence, strong nerves, good health,  
Sobriety and common sense,  
Joined with integrity, win wealth  
And raise a man to eminence.

We know this well, and yet at Fate's  
Stern laws we rail; our failures quite  
Embitter us. O! how one hates  
The man who prospers in life's fight.

Brains, pluck and skill—if one has piled  
Up wealth by exercising these  
Good traits, why should he be reviled  
By those who lack such qualities?

I'll never make my pile, for I  
Possess no skill in gathering coin,  
But in the common hue and cry  
Against the rich I shall not join.

I hold that malice is a sin,  
And envy too. I think such traits  
Can only find a lodgment in  
The warped minds of degenerates.

I blame not anybody who  
Amasses wealth; we all—had we  
The needed talents—would try to  
Acquire independency.

I'd like to be a millionaire.  
Yes, I admit it; yet I'm sure  
I grudge no man on earth the share  
Of wealth he's managed to secure.

---

## SUCCESS.

Let no one judge from the above  
Remarks on wealth that success lies  
In the accumulation of  
Hard cash; one should not thus surmise.

If one has helped his fellow-men,  
As best he could, in their distress—  
If one has always meant well, then  
One has, I take it, gained success.

For he who has thus acted will  
Know, as he draws anear life's goal,  
A joy and peace that cannot fill  
A mere gold-gatherer's sordid soul.

Many of us may not have won  
Success as money-makers, but  
The word "Failed", when our lives are done,  
Need not on our tombstones be cut.

Wars in the past were doubtless necessary.  
 But the world now perhaps can get along  
 Without resorting to those sanguinary  
 Methods of righting that which we think wrong.

An insult, for example, from some nation,  
 Envious of this Republic's greatness, might  
 Be settled honorably by arbitration.  
 Why rush, like brutes, into a bloody fight?

War! Is it hell, as Sherman one time stated?  
 Ah! it is worse. If hell exists, I feel  
 Its woes are very oft exaggerated.  
 But war!—it's far more awful, far more real.

---

### AN ARMED PEACE.

An armèd peace is almost as expensive  
 As war itself; though we may need these vast  
 And costly armaments, I'm apprehensive  
 As to the peace they "safeguard". Will it last?

It seems so strange that after very nearly  
 Two thousand years of Christian teaching we  
 Have gained—what? Peace?—sweet, lasting peace? Nay, merely  
 A truce of doubtful durability.

War may, ere long, engage the close attention  
 Of every nation in fair Christendom.  
 We live in terrifying apprehension  
 Of that curse which we know some day will come.

Ships, armaments and fighting men—we need them.  
 Yes, we for war must ever be prepared.  
 Prayers! Peace-funds! Arbitration courts! Who'll heed them?  
 When wars are wanted wars will be declared.



Those inconsiderate young men, who for weeks past have stoned cars when a chance has offered, now have got weary of the sport somewhat; some have been fined and others jailed. Ah! when these reckless youths assailed the trolley-crews and riders they recked not with Reyburn and with Clay. To work on cars or ride therein is most assuredly no sin. This fact, 'mong other wholesome truths, has now been taught these thoughtless youths. We peaceful citizens, therefore, who always have upheld the law, may once again, without a fear, avail ourselves of that most dear and sacred right so long denied to us; I mean the right to ride in the street cars. O! we should give thanks for this blest prerogative. To feel now when we ride that we don't place our lives in jeopardy is something to be thankful for. The reign of order and of law is re-set up. Peace is installed. The sympathetic strike, so-called, has proved a fizzle; listen to the hum of industry. Ah! who, these days of "sympathetic" strikes, failed to secure the things he likes? Who was deprived of bread, of beer, of milk, of meat? O! hear, just hear the rattle on our thoroughfares of carts heaped high with sundry wares. We all are happy, save a few dupes of unworthy leaders who don't realize the glory of our country and the flag we love. Our thrifty workers will not grieve when these disgruntled leaders leave the city, whose vast industries they tried to ruin. Ah! did these more thrifty workers, when told they must draw their trust-funds out, obey? No, they, though in the union ranks, still keep their money in the banks. The bankers at the old stands do their business still. Is this not true?\* Blind leaders! Pitifully blind! Why is it

\* With the view of crippling the fiduciary institutions of the city, the trade-union leaders had ordered every union workman to withdraw at once from banks and trust companies every dollar he had therein on deposit. The leaders also declared a sympathetic strike throughout the state, ordering all union workmen in all lines of industry to stop work on a certain day and not resume same until allowed to do so.

labor cannot find, in all the varied industries, more able officers than these? In politics they soon intend to drag their cause. Where will it end? These baffled, vengeful men, alas! would now array class against class. A new religion they'll next spring on us, to which we all must cling. They'll fail, though, in their every plan of exploiting the workingman. Yes, give them rope enough and they will surely hang themselves some day. It was our Mayor, yes, it was he who by his might crushed anarchy. Before the rabble others quailed, but the Mayor's courage never failed; when others would have parleyed, he stood for the law's supremacy; peace, lasting peace, dear to our hearts, he won by his intrepid arts. All honor to the strong, brave, stern and level-headed man—Reyburn. We Philadelphians well may be proud of Reyburn and of Clay; they did but do their duty, still they showed such pluck, and tact, and skill, and such impartiality in serving us, that every free, right-minded, loyal citizen feels grateful now to these two men. And to O'Leary, yes, to him our thanks are due. Long life to "Tim". To this staunch chief and his brave men, who safeguarded our city when mobs sought to pillage her, we owe a debt of gratitude also. And there's another sturdy son of our town towards whom each one is kindly drawn—'tis Kruger, who would not hand o'er his business to the enemy; all of us feel for Kruger, man of blood and steel, a deep regard; ah! no one could intimidate this man who stood heroically for the right. His cause was just; he won the fight. E'en Kruger's foes in their hearts must acknowledge that his cause was just.

Sentiments supposed to have been uttered by a national strike promoter and organizer when in Philadelphia, 1910, superintending the trolley-men's causeless strike which so signally failed of success. The chief demand of the strikers was recognition of their union, this demand the Trolley Company would not grant.

I have rings on my toes,  
As everybody knows;  
And corns, too—but then why mention that?  
Men shudder when I frown;  
I come from Detroit town.  
I was *once* a workingman; my name is Platt.

Pray don't forget the name,  
Platt—C. O. Platt; the same  
Is calculated to inspire awe.  
I'm a veritable god,  
Slaves tremble when I nod;  
Platt is my name, as I have said before.

Six thousand car-men, who  
Had fairly good jobs, threw  
Them up at my command; it seemed a shame,  
But then I had to show  
My authority, you know.  
Platt—Clement Platt, remember, is my name.

My admirers now wear  
Many medals upon their  
Manly bosoms, and on every medal my  
Full name—Platt, Clement O.—  
Appears 'neath my photo;  
And these tagged-idlers cheer as I mote by!

The police I defy.  
When I am mayor, then I  
Shall fire (I'm not talking through my hat)  
Every member of the force.  
I can get along, of course,  
Without the cops. My name, please note, is Platt.

I have this bum town scared.  
I've actually declared  
A general strike; this bluff has got 'em cowed.  
I am playing a deep game.  
Platt—C. O. Platt's my name;  
It is a name of which I'm rather proud.

I like the name, although  
 The letters C and O  
 And P don't fully please me; could I drop  
 The "O" I'd find more peace;  
 For I don't like police,  
 Yet my initials spell that dread word—"cop!"

I hate Reyburn and Clay;  
 But wait till Saturday  
 And then—no, I must not anticipate.  
 Blood in streams shall gush through these  
 [My name's Platt, spelt with two t's]  
 Fair streets unless the people arbitrate.

The timid ones to me  
 Now bend the shaking knee.  
 I'll force on them my arbitration plan.  
 O! I am gaining fame,  
 And C. O. Platt's my name.  
 I'm a "workingman" from Detroit, Mich-i-gan.

---

JOHN E. REYBURN.

[Written in respectful acknowledgment of the Mayor's courageous conduct, and of his great services to the city, during the strike riots in the early part of 1910.]

All honor to our Mayor, John E. Reyburn.  
 When lawlessness in our fair town prevailed,  
 When men, some men, of a high calling, quailed  
 Before the mob, the Mayor was firm and stern;  
 He knew what other men have yet to learn—  
 That parleying with mobs is wrong; he jailed  
 The miscreants who wantonly assailed  
 Men at their peaceful tasks; at every turn  
 He balked the schemers who had formed a plan  
 To unseat Justice and to paralyze  
 The industries that able men and wise  
 Have built here through laborious years. We can  
 With grateful hearts thank God for this strong man—  
 This strong, brave man who knows where duty lies.

[These dispassionate verses were suggested by the lawlessness and distress which, in the summer of 1911, attended an ill-advised and most unsuccessful strike for trade-union recognition in one of the world's greatest industrial plants, located in Philadelphia. It should not be thought that the writer is unfriendly disposed towards labor. He may believe that many trade-union officials are becoming unduly arrogant and are at times inclined to make preposterous demands which if granted would unsettle business generally and cause much suffering to everybody engaged therein; but one who has such beliefs as these and who frankly expresses them, does not, of course, show thereby that he is in any wise an enemy of the workers.]

Men, while hastening to their  
Work at early morning time,  
Waylaid in our city fair!  
Beaten! Why? Pray, for what crime?

Wanting work—this “crime” is theirs.  
Who assails them? Let us know  
Who, on the town's thoroughfares,  
Beat and kick the workers so.

Strikers! Well, we sympathize  
With them in their just complaints;  
We're not callous to their cries;  
Employers are—well, not saints.

What are now these strikers' woes?  
Did their late employers dare  
To ill-treat them and impose  
Wrongs which were too great to bear?

No, it seems their greatest woe  
Is the firm they once worked for  
Won't yield to “The Union”, so  
They—its members—break the law.

On the street they loaf and glare  
At the willing workers who  
Pass by on the way to their  
Work—work they are glad to do.

Men may work if they wish to.  
 This right who—yes, who denies?  
 We should protect all men who  
 This clear right would exercise.

We should teach those who belong  
 To trade-unions that to  
 Kill non-unionists is wrong:  
 This the strikers should not do.

We think these malcontents, then,  
 Are not warranted—not quite  
 In assaulting workingmen,  
 Which, to us, does not seem right.

## A VERACIOUS NARRATIVE.

A farmer once [this tale is true,  
 For otherwise I'd not tell it.  
 I'm really not a person who  
 Would fib merely to make a hit.]

This farmer he [if any doubt  
 The truth of this they only need  
 Consult the record to find out  
 That what I say is true indeed.]

The farmer had [of course I know  
 That writers oft prevaricate;  
 Hence this tale may be doubted, though  
 'Tis true, as I again would state.]

The farmer had a cow, the same  
 Was run o'er on the B. & O.  
 Against the road he made a claim—  
 A claim for damages, you know.

He claimed one hundred dollars, yes,  
 And got it. He the day before  
 Would have sold that cow for much less.  
 It pays to have a cow run o'er.



She wants the ballot in her hands,  
 The which in time she'll doubtless get.  
 Man has to bow to the demands  
 Of a determined suffragette.

Who can oppose a woman when  
 Her methods are as militant  
 As those who want to vote like men?  
 Thwart such a woman? No, I can't.

What! stop a suffragette who rails  
 'Gainst custom, laws and fate? Estop  
 Her tongue, which lashes men? Her nails,  
 Which scar the features of a cop?

Stop her from hurling brickbats through  
 Shop windows?—from assaulting State  
 Officials?—from attempting to  
 Burn halls where'n men congregate?

Nay, this at present most rampant  
 Hysteria of hers will grow  
 Less marked in time; and so I shan't  
 Try to suppress her now. Oh, no!

Give woman carte-blanche, as it were,  
 To do what she thinks serves her cause.  
 'Tis unchivalrous to jail her  
 For breaking man's or e'en God's laws.

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#### AN UNIMPORTANT MATTER.

I do not care a dam (of course  
 I mean by this a tinker's dam)  
 For lobster and anchovy sauce;  
 I'd rather any day have ham.

This matter may appear of slight  
 Importance; but let me explain,  
 I merely tell it so I might  
 Say "dam" and not be thought profane.

In these days woman excels man  
 In courage, nimble wit and zeal.  
 Listen, O! listen, ye who can,  
 To certain truths I would reveal.

Fear wrecks men's lives. Ah! we bards, who  
 Through psychologic lenses peer  
 In human souls, know well how few  
 Men in the world are void of fear.

Man's cowardice may briefly be  
 Depicted here; and briefly, too,  
 In this sketch woman's bravery  
 And ready art we might review.

When they first met they felt they were  
 Made for each other: she knew he  
 Was her soul's destined mate; in her  
 The man found his affinity.

He lacked the nerve, though, to propose.  
 The woman pined not in despair;  
 She roped in later, the world knows,  
 A guileless multimillionaire.

\* \* \* \* \*

'Twere well perhaps, before I close,  
 To let the gentle reader glance  
 Upon the lives now led by those  
 Who figured in this love romance.

A married pair dwell at the shore  
 Most sumptuously, I have heard:—  
 A blighted wretch works in a store  
 On Market street not far from Third.

And such is fate! He who declares  
 Men strong and women weak has yet  
 To learn a thing or two. Who dares  
 Talk thusly to a suffragette?

## SCHOOL TEACHER AND SUFFRAGETTE.

I hope Miss Margaret will be  
Very successful in this life.  
She can't be president, but she  
May be a president's dear wife.

But O! she is a suffragette.  
Fate, consequently, may have meant  
The fair, ambitious Mar-ga-ret  
To be an actual president.

Down—down with man; let woman rule.  
Can she do so? I think she can.  
Too long, too long she's been the tool,  
The slave and plaything of base man.

Love? Nonsense. Pooh! No militant  
Vote-huntresses such weakness show.  
Love? Up-to-date young women can't  
Trust men enough for that. O no!

We all—both men and women—love  
Our country; true, the petticoats  
Love the Church more; 'twill rank above  
The State when women have the votes.

Well, well, the Church is pure; and who  
Doubts her infallibility?  
Most women would prefer her to  
The State, and this appeals to me.

So if the Church should reign again,  
If she her old claim reasserts  
To rule our consciences, we men  
Won't mind; we like to please the skirts.

Fair woman's privileges here  
On earth are not enough—not quite.  
The ballot might enlarge her sphere;  
She really claims it as a right.

'Tis time on earth for something new.  
What good has tyrant man e'er done?  
The world will learn a thing or two  
When "Margie" reigns at Wash-ington.

Perhaps these lines are foolish, yet  
Many true things are said in jest.  
But I should close; Miss Mar-ga-ret  
Is tired and deserves a rest.

Miss Margaret might "keep me in",  
Or set me some hard task, I fear;  
Or in some manner discipline  
Me if I do not stop *right here*.

But "bards" are privileged to sin  
Against established laws sometimes.  
Forgive me then; don't "keep me in"  
For perpetrating rhymes—or crimes.

Miss Margaret is not, I hear,  
Unduly strict; they say she's kind.  
Still if she means to be severe  
And keep me in—well, I won't mind.

Expulsion—that's the thing I fear.  
I dread no other punishment.  
I shall, when called, at once appear  
Before our future President.

Whatever tasks she sets I will  
Accomplish, though they take up all  
A livelong day—from morn until  
The evening dewdrops on earth fall.

"Everybody's doing it now."—Line from a popular ditty.

Verses written to ——— while on her European tour in the summer and fall of 1912.

The song says we're all doing it;  
 'Tis likely we all are; I'm no  
 Exception, as perhaps this bit  
 Of verse which I write here will show.

From youth up I have rhymed, and still  
 I'm at it; though by doing it  
 I ne'er derived, perhaps ne'er will  
 Derive the slightest benefit.

I know I ought to stop, and yet  
 Among the songs that I have sung  
 There may be one—but don't forget  
 To mention me to Sallie Young.

Yes, as I was about to state,  
 Some song sung one time by Cliff Ford  
 May some day in some heart vibrate  
 A kindly, sympathetic chord.

But I'm too sanguine, as it were.  
 No verse-line can I ever drop  
 That will in any manner stir  
 "Her" heart; and so I better stop.

Stop? Nay, I cannot stop, I fear.  
 'Twere easier, in point of fact,  
 To stop those waters as they near  
 Niagara's awesome cataract.

Stop? Ah! go stop the swelling sea's  
 Inrushing tide, the flight of time,  
 The courses of the stars: all these  
 One, mayhap, stop—but not my rhyme.

Aye! stop earth's journey round the sun,  
 Stop e'en a suffragette's loose tongue,  
 But try not, for it can't be done,  
 To—O! but how is Sallie Young?

I don't regret, though, giving my  
Time to the Muse, whose smiles so bright  
Lured me from business, in which I  
Might have become a shining light.

Perhaps I'll never write a line  
By which I'll score much of a hit.  
Fame! Ah! it never may be mine!  
But I still go on "doing it".

Fame's ladder is so hard to scale;  
I've not reached yet its second rung;  
If I keep on, though, I can't fail,  
And so—but, say, how's Sallie Young?

Your foot now presses, I might say,  
Fair Albion's historic soil,  
Whereon, as in a former day,  
Men live and love and dream and toil.

Grand has been England's past, and she  
Is still supreme—still great and wise.  
God bless our kin across the sea,  
To whom we're bound by deathless ties.

The land of Shakespeare! I would lay  
With reverence upon this bard's  
Sepulchered dust a—er—but, say,  
Give Sallie Young my best regards.

The freest land upon the sphere  
Is England: there true liberty  
Prevailed while human beings here  
Were kept in hopeless slavery.

Lincoln redeemed our fair land when  
He freed the wretched slaves therein.  
Now we are happier, better men;  
We can't forget, though, our past sin.

Foul crimes, though they be pardoned, still  
Leave marks; but good deeds, though unsung,  
Tend to—er—um—I trust you will  
Remember me to Sallie Young.



Sometimes with indignation my  
Blood boils when o'er these things I dwell.  
The fearful past is—hem—say, I  
Trust—er—that Sallie Young's right well.

I was a child when war began,  
Else I'd have been [as from the gist  
Of these remarks one might judge] an  
Unyielding abolitionist.

A love for freedom seems to dwell  
Within my heart. Ah! do you know,  
I think this is because I'm—well,  
A poet, if I may say so.

Perhaps had I been older when  
The war broke out, I might have sprung  
Upon my country's foes; but then  
I—ah! but how fares Sallie Young?

You who are now in London-town,  
Whose fogs are wont to hide that sun  
Which beams these days so bright'y down  
On Humpty-third and Ham-il-ton,

May smile whilst glancing at these lines.  
Doubtless you'll think I ought to quit  
This work ere this day's sun declines,  
And not, as now, be doing it.

Yet is it very wrongful, when  
Athwart one's brain strange fancies flit,  
To sit down at one's desk with pen  
In hand and there try doing it?

Business has not knocked sentiment  
From out my life; nor has time's flight  
Impaired, to any great extent,  
My heart. O no! my heart's all right.

The silent passing of the years  
Has calmed my spirit, dulled my wit;  
But yet in grief sometimes, and tears,  
I find myself a-doing it.

England! She's worthy our regards,  
 Aye, and our love. I hold most dear  
 The birth-land of the Bard of bards:  
 The world's resplendent star—Shakespeare!

England I love—I always will.  
 'Tis the true land of liberty.  
 We here held men in bondage till  
 Immortal Lincoln set them free.

We boasted—boasted blatantly  
 Of freedom when we owned the while  
 Four million slaves! Hypocrisy  
 Like this must have made Satan smile.

When our slaves broke their chains then we  
 Chased them as far [forgive us, God,]  
 As Canada: there they were free.  
 On British ground no slave e'er trod.

The stain upon our shield has been  
 Effaced by sacrifice of lives.  
 We're free as England now; our sin  
 Is past—its memory, though, survives.

Crimes, though condoned by heaven, yet  
 Leave scars which time can not out-blot.  
 Our country! May we ne'er forget  
 Its saviour, Lincoln, who was shot.

— — — — —  
 YELPERS.

My having dropt a rhythmic line  
 In Eng'land's praise seems to excite  
 Certain compatriots of mine,  
 Who rate me for it. Is this right?

Commenting on faults we possess  
 And upon virtues found elsewhere,  
 Does not denote that one is less  
 A patriot, as some declare.

To yelp at England seems to please  
 Some men immensely. I've begun  
 To get impatient, though, with these  
 Yelpers; they greatly tire one.

A dreamer! Bah! But few  
Care aught for him, it seems.  
The world wants men who do  
Great things—not one who dreams.

Though his ideals be high,  
Though he conceives bold schemes,  
Yet—a mere dreamer! Why  
Should we regard his dreams?

Yet busy men sometimes,  
At night 'neath luna's beams,  
May be thrilled by the rhymes  
Of some drone who dreams dreams.

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### GOOD INTENTIONS.

Are good intentions well  
To have, or is it true  
They pave the way to hell,  
As it is said they do?

Intentions that are good,  
E'en if not one of them  
Be carried out, I would  
Not utterly condemn.

Intentions harm no one;  
Acts may be better, still  
If no great deeds are done,  
Consider, pray, the *will*.

*Suggested by reading one of William Watson's poems.*

To the Editor of "The Bulletin."

*Dear Sir:*

It is generally conceded that woman is not entirely devoid of faults, but when a mere male creature presumes to study her, he should not, on discovering some trivial feminine foibles characteristic of the sex in general, proceed to excoriate the individual woman whom he has been examining; no, that doesn't seem chivalrous; it were better (certainly more diplomatic) for the bold psychologist to speak of woman in the abstract, and in this manner (in the abstract) chide her—very, very gently chide her for her shortcomings. It is safer, paradoxical as it may appear, to impeach a whole sex than to criticise harshly an individual member of it. The impaled individual, if a man, may knock you down; if a woman—well, who can tell what may happen? But when one rails at men or women collectively, they and the world at large are apt only to smile.

I am led to utter these sentiments by reading William Watson's poem, just published, entitled "The Woman With the Serpent's Tongue." I believe the disgruntled Watson would not have ventured to lampoon a man.

Allow me to present some verses of my own, called forth by the English poet's poem.

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### WOMAN.

Woman is human, and, therefore,  
 A fault or two she may possess.  
 But what of that? We men adore  
 And idolize her none the less.

Ah! from the cradle to the tomb's  
 Dread brink, a woman plays her part  
 Well on life's stage; her smile illumines  
 The sad world's palpitating-heart.

Man in his struggles here on earth  
 Her blessed ministration needs;  
 Without her, of what little worth  
 Were all his aims, and faiths, and creeds!

She is not faultless, no, not quite—  
Not wholly so ; but then, but then,  
She is the world's pride and delight,  
The darling of the gods and men.

The souls of men and souls of gods  
Thrill with love's joy when she is by.  
Who would not, when she smiles or nods,  
Be willing in her cause to die?

Ah ! when she smiles the old earth rolls  
Blithely along. What joy men find  
When, in the deep depths of their souls,  
Fair woman's image is enshrined !

Life without her ! What would it be?  
I hardly dare prognosticate.  
Yet one of that sex is, we see,  
Scored by a would-be laureate.

What private cause impelled him to  
His spleenful outburst? I'm inclined  
To think he wooed her and she "threw  
Him down" ; he now airs his small mind.

We read his verse, but none can tell  
Why he thus rants with rhythmic skill.  
A man if he can not speak well  
Of any woman should keep still.

But here is a—a—well, a bard  
(A slanderer is not a man)  
Who scolds a woman. Why regard  
Him as a man? I never can.

In quest of treasure, which  
Might tend to make one rich,  
I long ago sent out a ship to sea :  
But of that venture no  
Tidings have come, although  
My ship, Hope says, will yet return to me.

There are those who aver  
Hope is untrue—that her  
Fair words and promises are not to be  
Relied upon : but drear  
Were life without Hope near  
To say our ships will some day come from sea.

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## GHOSTLY VISITORS.

When at my desk I write  
Far, far into the night,  
How often in my room strange guests appear :  
They enter silently,  
And gaze so upon me ;  
Their visitations, though, I do not fear.

They harm me not, and why  
Be rude to them, and by  
My manner show they are unwelcome? Nay,  
I pity them : so sad  
They seem. I never had  
The heart to turn those solemn guests away.



O! if my soul could only break  
 Its fetters and on pinions fleet  
 Soar in the infinite, I'd make  
 All other bards take a back seat.

I'd pass in my flight from this sphere  
 Many who've sung long since, but I  
 Would slow up when I reached Shakespeare;  
 I would not, could not pass Bill by.

I'd pause and, if he would allow,  
 I'd shake his hand. I'd love to gaze  
 Upon the forehead and the brow  
 Of him who wrote such wondrous plays.

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### FAME'S INSTABILITY.

How insecure a thing is fame!  
 The plays attributed to one  
 William Shakespeare were not, they claim,  
 Written by Avon's songful son.

Yes, fame is insecure; Shakespeare  
 Is now attacked; I, too, may be  
 Doubted some day; these stanzas here  
 They'll say could not be done by me.

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### THE BACONIAN THEORY.

If those plays that bear Shakespeare's name  
 Were written, as some parties claim,  
 By Bacon or by  
 Another learned guy,  
 What's the odds?—those plays still read the same.

Doubts of authorship cannot, I know,  
 Mar one's joy in those dramas, although  
 I like to think 'twas Shakespeare  
 Who wrote Hamlet, and Lear,  
 And Macbeth, and those sonnets also.

I'm not deficient, if you please,  
In one art: 'tis, as you may guess,  
The art of making enemies,  
In which art I've gained some success.

Men who have never made a foe  
May be angelic—very true ;  
But they are weak and forceless, so  
Give me an enemy or two.

A man is very properly  
Judged by the friends with whom he goes  
And by the foes he makes ; let me  
Be judged so. I've both friends and foes.

If I'm loved for the enemies  
I've made I shall be, I confess,  
Much pleased ; I'm glad when some one sees  
Something to love which I possess.

To friends and foes whose love and hate  
Have helped me I have cause to be  
Most thankful ; I appreciate  
The help they *all* have rendered me.

To those who are no friends nor foes,  
Who grant no favors, but allow  
Me a fair field—yes, I to those  
Feel also very kindly now.

And so towards all the men who dwell  
On earth whom I have met I may  
Feel kindly ; I wish them all well,  
For all have helped me on life's way.

I scarcely can repress a sigh  
The while in verse I dip:  
I e'en must weep—you ask me why?  
Our Nettie has the grip.

Perhaps the grip has Nettie, still  
In either case, you know,  
There's cause to grieve, for when Net's ill  
My tears are bound to flow.

And they are flowing now as they  
Ne'er flowed before: it looks  
As though my tears will wash away  
The records in my books.

Lunch time has come, but yet I fear  
I can't eat even pie.  
Who can gulp grub when Net's not here?  
Not I—no, no, not I.

Out in the joyless day I go:  
While on the thoroughfare  
I cry aloud for Net, but O!  
That dear girl is not there.

Back to the office then I reel,  
As one made drunk with grief.  
Self-slaughter, I'm inclined to feel,  
Might bring me some relief.

Mine is indeed the grief that kills:  
I stagger in the store.  
'Tis hard, I find, to make out bills  
When one's heart is so sore.

And yet I happily do know  
That somewhere far beyond  
The gathering gloom Hope's star doth glow.  
Why, then, need I despond?

For me there may be pleasure yet  
In this life here ; yes, when  
We have back with us little Net  
I'll breathe and live again.

But now I'm practically dead,  
A fact which is quite plain.  
I try to *think*, but my poor head  
Cannot endure the strain.

A faintness comes upon me now,  
My pen falls from my hand :  
The ceaseless throbbing of my brow  
Is most too much to stand.

My heart—but no. Why air my woes?  
Fair Nettie might prefer  
The grip, bad as it is, who knows,  
To these lines I write her.

I'll stop right here. Why speak about  
That heart of mine? Ah! let  
It break. Who cares? Without a doubt  
Our one thought is—Annette.

For she's down with la-grippe: therefore  
We *all* are quite "upset".  
May Heaven soon to health restore  
Our dearest girl—Annette.

---

RECOVERED.

Annette now is happily o'er  
The grip ; she is with us once more.  
She's come back less robust,  
But her lost strength, we trust,  
Will soon be restored in the store.

## A SONG

As sung on one memorable occasion in Stokeson's  
Mushroom-Annex.

I think it is nice—yes, I think it is bliss  
To work in a place as pleasant as this:  
Where all are so kind the work seems like play,  
And our lives are made bright with new blessings each day.  
The sweet friendly feeling pervading the place  
Enchants every one, fills each worker with grace.  
And now I'm so glad that to this place I came  
Because of some one, but I won't tell her name:  
No, I won't tell her name: I won't tell her name.

Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la, la,  
Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la.

Time never can weaken those ties strong and dear  
Of friendship and love that are daily formed here:  
Yes, the hearts that in this seed-establishment beat  
Know a rapture that makes life especially sweet.  
One can find in the store more true pleasure and mirth  
Than anywhere else on the face of the earth.  
O! 'tis good to be here: if I never came  
I would never have met—but I won't tell her name.  
No, I won't tell her name: I won't tell her name.

Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la, la, la,  
Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la.

When awearied, as sometimes may happen, we need  
 But turn to our nearest co-worker to read  
 In his or her face a sympathy keen  
 That throws a bright glamour of joy o'er the scene.  
 There are smiles to encheer us should we feel depressed:  
 And O! there is nothing so lovely and blest  
 As a smile. Ah, like that one which yesternight came  
 On the face of—but no, no: I won't tell her name.  
 I won't tell her name: no, I won't tell her name.

Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la, la,  
 Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la.

A few days ago, to be candid with you,  
 I felt rather gloomy, in fact I felt blue:  
 For something occurred, I need not say what,  
 That seemed to increase the gloom of my lot.  
 But some one came to me and thus she did say:—  
 "To sorrow, my friend, you had better not give way."  
 She cheered me so much—this sweet, lovely dame.  
 But I won't tell her name, no, I won't tell her name.  
 I won't tell her name: no, I won't tell her name.

Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la, la,  
 Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la.

If Strokes—our friend Strokes—were to hear me thus sing  
 He might not think it was exactly the thing:  
 Perhaps he would tell me to hire a hall:  
 I think I shall do so and invite you there all.  
 Or on the stage in the footlight's bright glare  
 I'll sing of this girl who is so sweet and fair,  
 And singing of her may win me great fame;  
 But I won't tell her name, no, I won't tell her name.  
 I won't tell her name: no, I won't tell her name.

Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la, la,  
 Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la.



You may not believe it, but yet it is so,  
 That I once appeared in the great Barnum-show :  
 Before clerking here I was considered a star,  
 I could hang by my heels from the top trapeze-bar.  
 I was then very *highly* accomplished you see,  
 But work in the office has since weakened me.  
 Lofty stunts I can't do now : it does seem a shame,  
 But yet to this place I am glad that I came  
 Because of—but no, no, I won't tell her name.

Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la, la, la,  
 Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la.

The girl that I love is the star of my life :  
 Some day I shall ask her to be my dear wife :  
 For I may say here I am very sure  
 That life without her I can never endure.  
 And so if she refuses me I'll blow out my brains :  
 Perhaps the girl will weep over my remains,  
 And then the way she treated me may seem a great shame.  
 But I won't tell her name, no, I won't tell her name.  
 I won't tell her name : no, I won't tell her name.

Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la, la, la,  
 Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la.

Singing topical songs is not quite my forte,  
 I have warbled sufficient, and therefore I ought  
 To let others sing who more clearly can show  
 The charms of this girl whom I worship so.  
 Her eyes they are bright and her lips they are red,  
 All the blood in my body for her I would shed.  
 Yes for one so adorable I would die game,  
 But I won't tell her name, no, I won't tell her name.  
 I won't tell her name : no, I won't tell her name.

Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la, la, la,  
 Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la.



## A SENSATIONAL SONG AND DANCE.

As rendered in the Potato Vaults with great success by the author and his able colleague in vaudeville.

The other afternoon at the hour of four  
George and I said good-by to our friends in the store :  
We went for a walk, the weather was clear,  
We dropped in a saloon and we called out for beer :  
Several schooners were brought, we emptied them all,  
Then George began singing " After the Ball " :  
I joined in the—hic—chorus, I think—hic—George was tight,  
But when I said so, why, he wanted to fight :  
Yes, when I said so he—hic—wanted to fight.

Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la, la, la,  
Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la.

So I bloodied his nose, he blackened my eye :  
For the police the bartender loudly did cry.  
We took a ride that night at the city's expense,  
And were fined the next morning for our little offense.  
We paid the fine like men, left the court arm in arm,  
And declared that this life on the earth was a charm.  
We promenaded the streets till the hour of noon,  
And then we dropped into another saloon :  
Yes, then we dropped into another saloon.

Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la, la, la,  
Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la.

A week after that we went back to the store,  
Mr. Stokeson was standing in front of the door,  
He said that if we were inclined to drink beer  
We better work at Durpee's, or else go with Drear :  
He said that he didn't want us at all,  
Told us to go with Lanbreth, or else go with Mawle :  
He assured us he wanted no men of our ilk,  
That he had supplied our places with those who drank milk :  
That he had supplied our places with those who drank milk.

Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la, la, la,  
Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la.

Mr. Stokeson named others, he mentioned Meshell,  
Told us to go thither or else go to—well,  
He did not say where, but we could surmise  
That the place he referred to was not in the skies.  
So we turned from the store: we two who aspired  
To be in the firm some fine day were now “fired”.  
Of course we felt sad, so we each dropped a tear:  
We were filled with emotion—yes, and soon filled with beer,  
For ere parting we blew in our last plunks on beer.

Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la, la,  
Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la.

I've been looking for work at every seed place,  
They don't seem to be stuck on my shape or my face.  
Th's looking for work is pleasant—I don't think.  
I really believe it will drive me to drink.  
Had I the price of a drink now you bet I know where  
To drown all my trouble, my sorrow and care:  
But alas! I'm dead broke, this fact is quite clear,  
I am looking for work and also looking for beer:  
Yes, I'm looking for work, but I prefer beer.

Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la, la,  
Tra la, la, la, la, la, tra la, la, la.

As revised and adopted by members of the  
Noonday Social Circle  
At one of their symposiums in the  
Bean Department.

*Selection*—"When I was a Boy."

*Characters introduced*—Sir Joseph Porter and Cousin Hebe.

*Impersonations by* C. P. and Miss ——.

*Sir Jos.* When I was a boy I was very cute and sweet,  
I played in the gutter, I lived upon the street;  
I never told a lie. O me! but I was good;  
In fact I was the idol of the neighborhood.

*Hebe.* In fact he was the idol of the neighborhood.

*Sir Jos.* I used to chew gum till my jaws got sore,  
And now I keep the books in a Market street store.

*Hebe.* He used to chew gum till his jaws got sore,  
And now he keeps the books in a Market street store.

[*Both dance.*]

*Sir Jos.* When I grew up I guzzled malt beer,  
So they sent me to jail several times a year;  
At last, being very fond of jokes,  
They apprenticed me to Mister Strokes.

*Hebe.* They apprenticed him to Mister Strokes.

*Sir Jos.* And now they like me so much, you see,  
They have placed me in an office where it's nice to be.

*Hebe.* Yes, now they like him so much, you see,  
They have placed him in an office where it's nice to be.

[*Both dance.*]

*Sir Jos.* The other day I got too gay,  
So they sent for a cop to take me away,  
But they missed me so when I was gone  
That they called me back the very next morn.

*Hebe.* Yes, they called him back the very next morn.

*Sir Jos.* I've been somewhat dazed since I came back,  
For the cop knocked me silly with his black-jack.

*Hebe.* He's been somewhat dazed since he came back,  
For the cop knocked him silly with his black-jack.

[*Both dance.*]

*Sir Jos.* Now all young men, whoever you may be,  
If you wish to get in an office just like me,  
Drink plenty of beer and never tell a lie,  
And you will be here by and by.

*Hebe.* Yes, here or in jail by and by.

*Dialogue.*

*Sir Jos.* Cousin Hebe, you should stick to the text—not misquote me. You fail to realize the subtle significance of this ethical act of ours. I am endeavoring to inculcate on the minds of the young men present the fact that by emulating me they will eventually be rewarded by obtaining a position, perhaps as high as mine, in the office of this particular establishment.

*Hebe.* Pardon my seeming frivolity, Sir Joseph, and let us repeat the last lines of our stunt—I mean our ethical act.

[*They resume the song.*]

*Sir Jos.* Now—as I've said—never, never tell a lie,  
And you may be here by and by.

*Hebe.* Yes, you may be here by and by.

*Sir Jos.* Be careful to dance the tra la, la lee

[*He dances.*]

And you'll surely be in an office just like me.

*Hebe.* Yes, dance this tra la, la, lee with vim

[*She dances.*]

And you'll surely get in an office just like him.

[Spurred on by the vociferous applause of their audience, they both dance very vigorously in the arena formed by the bean-sacks.]

*Sir Jos.* 'Tis almost one, and I fear the gong  
Will cut me short in the midst of my song,  
So if you wish to hear me sing more  
You must wait until we meet on the beautiful shore.

*Hebe.* You must wait until we meet on the beautiful shore.

*Sir Jos.* I really and truly believe that I  
Will have more time to sing in the sweet by and by.

*Hebe.* He really and truly believes, Oh my!  
That he'll have more time to sing in the sweet by and by.

[*Exeunt, both dancing.*]

#### ART'S ARTIFICES.

The lines which on this page appear  
Do not point a moral, 'tis clear.  
It is quite evident  
They are no ornament;  
But they fill space, that's why they are here.

When space is unoccupied I  
Fill the void, so to speak. That is why  
I most always stick  
In a slight limerick:  
It is such easy verse to supply.

(Suggested when working over the third stanza of the poem  
*Vague Vaporings*.)

Had I served Trade's god with the zeal  
I served fair Poesy I'm sure  
I'd not now in my old age feel  
(This sounds like Wolsey) so blame poor.

Yet, while not in *the* firm, I can  
Say that I'm not what one may term  
A superannuated man;  
I'm very glad I'm not *infirm*.

My heart is not yet ossified;  
Still through my arteries the warm  
Blood circulates. I'll put aside  
For future use the chloroform.

My mind and brain are clear; my arm  
Is strong—not quite as supple though;  
But life has not yet lost its charm,  
And so the hemlock I'll forego.

The future's mine! Hope, sir, appears  
As friendly now as when she stood  
By me in those departed years.  
O! I may yet—don't scoff—make good.

Being, then, ablebodied still  
(O! say not that my star has set)  
It is quite likely that I will  
By chucking poetry get there yet.

I must divorce myself from rhyme—  
An art I have been wedded to.  
When in the firm I'll have more time  
To court the Muse; till then, adieu.

Adieu! The luring call of rhyme  
I must ignore, nor dare I dip  
In verse till I ('twill come in time)  
Am taken into partnership.

Till then I'll curb my roving-soul,  
 My restless spirit I shall quell;  
 I'll metaphorically roll  
 Up my shirt-sleeves and work like ——.

When I'm a partner then, of course,  
 I can make up for all the time  
 Wasted in work; yes, when I'm boss  
 I'll pass my days just writing rhyme.

A sign that reads Phillips and—who?,  
 Dealers in—let's say Artichokes,  
 Shall be flung 'cross the avenue.  
 Won't it look well—Phillips and S \* \* \* \* ?

Then I shall be a man of means,  
 Whose fame extends beyond the seas,  
 A specialist in Lima Beans,  
 And an authority on Peas.

Anticipatively these days  
 (Ah! much of truth is found in jokes)  
 On that emblazoned sign I gaze—  
 That sign which reads :—PHILLIPS & S \* \* \* \* !

---

INJUSTICE.

Certain connoisseurs cannot commend  
 My verses, at least they pretend  
 To see nothing in them;  
 And so they condemn  
 Those lines which they can't comprehend.

A genius, though, is not long  
 Kept down by injustice and wrong.  
 I shall not despair;  
 I'll (this aint hot air)  
 Dazzle earth yet with a grand, sweet song.



A BRIEF ROMANCE OF A FAIR YOUNG HADDONITE.

Supposed to have been written by Miss ———.

I have the proper sort of beau,  
He says I'm more to him than life:  
On me he freely spends his dough,  
He wants me to become his wife.

I am inclined to think that he  
Is Mr. Right all right, all right.  
He positively worships me:  
He calls upon me every night.

He gives me many costly things,  
He brings me jewelry galore:  
He loads my hands with diamond-rings,  
He buys me bracelets by the score.

My beau takes me to all the shows:  
He's just sent me a seal-skin sack.  
He constantly on me bestows  
Rare flowers, books and bric-a-brac.

He has commissioned Laurent's to  
Keep me supplied with choicest sweets:  
Such things, he knows, I like to chew  
Whilst checking up the order sheets.

O! he's dead stuck on me all right:  
Why, in a letter he said I  
Was his Angelic Camdenite  
For whom he willingly would die.

There's not a wish I have but what  
That beau of mine anticipates.  
Next spring he'll sail me in his yacht  
To lands where Joy for us awaits.

On Sunday afternoons in his  
Best automobile we are seen :  
On Haddon Avenue we whiz  
Along by means of gasoline.

For me the Muse he oft invokes,  
He raves in verse about my charms.  
He'd call here, if allowed by Strokes,  
To fold me daily in his arms.

Yes, many calls, did Strokes permit,  
My friend would at the seed-house pay :  
'Twould be a joy for him to sit  
At my feet through the whole long day.

He must defer, though, that rare bliss  
Till evening. Ah, then when we meet  
He presses on my lips a kiss—  
One so ecstatically sweet!

Love! O how much it brightens life!  
What joy to one's heart it doth give!  
I am—just think—to be his wife  
Before the lilacs bloom this spring.

What visions of delight appear  
To me as I with rapture gaze  
Into the future. O! how dear  
Are these love-lighted winter days.

He says I am divinely tall,  
My eyes are stars, my teeth are pearl,  
And that he never loved at all  
Until he met his Jersey girl.

My lips like red, red roses are ;  
(He means in color I suppose.)  
In fact, he even goes so far  
As to write sonnets to my nose.

A noble brow, he says, is mine,  
A forehead beautifully fair;  
But O! most glorious and divine  
Is my great wealth of raven hair.

He swore I had a brainy head,  
A dainty waist, (the nerve of him!)  
He also (ought I tell it?) said  
My ankles were so neat and trim.

The compliments he pays are true:  
My worth he very clearly sees.  
It's nice to have a lover who  
Thus understands my qualities.

This Tuesday evening he became  
Most eloquent: he deeply sighed,  
Then begged me on his knees to name  
The day when I would be his bride.

He seized my hands and pleaded so,  
That I was just about to say  
*Let's wed to-morrow*, when my beau  
Evanished in the air away.

My sweetheart disappeared. I had—  
Girl-like—been dreaming in my room:  
And now, alas! I'm very sad:  
I sit alone here in the gloom.

No more his thrilling voice into  
My listening ear breathes vows of love—  
The olden joy, yet ever new,  
That had its birth in heaven above.

From sight, but O! not from my mind,  
My gallant friend has passed away.  
I waken now, ah me! to find  
A world unblest by Love's bright ray.

Fate mocks at me in my despair:  
My woman's heart is rent in twain.  
Can I—can I this sorrow bear?  
O! shall I ever smile again?

My lover's gone, my dream is o'er:  
I scarcely can indite these rhymes.  
I think to-morrow at the store  
I'll shed a tear or two at times.

---

### A CAUTIOUS MAN.

I'm a cautious man, and lately  
I have acted most sedately;  
For frivolity is greatly  
Out of place I feel: and so  
I shall walk with circumspection,  
I'll do naught without reflection,  
Lest a critical inspection  
Of my life some faults might show.

---

### WHAT'S THE USE.

I'd kick the chandelier,  
Or "walk off on my ear",  
E'en "shoot the hat",  
If her regard I'd gain,  
Or her love could obtain  
By doing that.

What is the use, though, in  
Doing these things to win  
A woman fair,  
Who might, when her love wanes,  
Give me for all my pains,  
An icy stare?

Ah! many thoughts are running through  
 My mind on this eve of a new  
 Year—Nineteen-ten :  
 Thoughts of old friends, of life—that part  
 I spent down in the city's heart,  
 'Mong busy men.

It seems now the old neighborhood  
 Around Christ Church I've left for good;  
 I would, therefore,  
 Express this wish—the wish that I  
 Shall be remembered kindly by  
 Those in the store.

I not unfrequently recall  
 My recent co-mates, one and all,  
 In bulbs and seeds;  
 And my heart oft with rapture thrills  
 When thinking of The Wabash Mills  
 And—Archie Meeds.

When, retrospectively, I gaze  
 Back on the old vanished days,  
 What mem'ries come  
 Thronging into my mind! Yes, what  
 Fond memories! But I must not  
 Get tiresome.

What careless rhymes I'm writing here!  
 Ah! some may think that I am "queer".  
 He who invokes  
 The Muse is most unbusinesslike.  
 I wonder how these rhymes will strike  
 Friend Walter Strokes!

Others have twitted me sometimes  
 For venturing to deal in rhymes.  
 Is it a fault—  
 A grievous fault to soar into  
 Fancy's vast realm as poets do?  
 But what says "Walt"?

Will he these idle lines condemn?  
Will he have time to look at them?  
Yes, maybe so.  
Yes, for the sake of auld lang syne  
These well-intentioned lines of mine  
He'll read, I know.

In Traffic's quarter, it appears,  
One must be careful; I for years  
Held, in a store,  
My soul in leash. But now, ye gods!  
I'll do just like the higher bards—  
I'll let it soar!

Bold? Yes, I'm very, very bold;  
Quite so—*on paper*, be it told.  
But otherwise  
I am particularly mild—  
As mild, almost, as any child  
Beneath the skies.

I can right valorously wield  
A pen, but on a battle-field  
I'd faint, I think.  
I wou'd not like to shed my gore,  
Though I don't mind how I outpour  
My soul—and ink.

Yet life, as we may truly say,  
Is a real battle, and some day  
On its field all  
Must yield the ghost. The sword and pen  
Will from the tired hands of men  
Drop at Death's call.

But come. I did not mean to be,  
So sorrowful; no, no, let me  
A note more gay  
Strike on my lyre, so to speak.  
The world is happy; let us seek  
Its joys today.

I never was a man of deeds  
Like Wilson, Taft, and Strokes, and Meeds.  
It rather looks  
As though they'll ne'er place on my brow  
The victor's crown. I write rhymes now.  
I once kept books.

Ambition! No. I am content  
To dabble in mere sentiment—  
To dream, to weave  
Strange fancies, to let memory  
Bring some of life's bright scenes to me  
This New Year's eve.

Towards my late comrades I have none  
But friendly feelings; may each one  
Meet with success.  
To all—from Boss to office boy—  
I wish long life, good health, and joy,  
And happiness.

We may not all be millionaires  
[I'm told that even they have cares—  
Perhaps they do]  
But we may all find life to be  
Worth living if to ourselves we  
Prove ever true.

But I should cut these verses short.  
I've said enough; no doubt I ought  
Apologize.  
Sometimes I don't know when to end.  
But, really, I did not intend  
To moralize.



I am a poor relation  
Of a man most high in station:  
He runs a lift at Jimble's—runs it purely for his health:  
I am proud of him, and one day,  
I believe it was a Monday,  
Being short of cash, I called upon this gentleman of wealth.

I approached his elevator,  
He received me with a greater  
Show of cordiality than was expected, but when I  
Mildly touched him for a dollar,  
He reached out and grabbed my collar,  
Then with me he mopped the store up till I thought that I would  
die.

I arose somewhat disjointed,  
And I might say disappointed,  
From the aisle where he last chucked me: I could not repress a  
groan.  
Riding homeward in a trolley  
I felt very melancholy.  
When I'm next in need of money I'll let relatives alone.

---

### A NAUTICAL TWIST.

A jolly tar stood in the bow  
Of a ship that was maining the plough—  
I mean ploughing the main.  
I'm no sailor, 'tis plain.  
I get twisted on sea-terms somehow.

With the laudable motive of making the drink habit more safe and more respectable, the Subway Tavern, as they styled it, was introduced. It was thought that these taverns, in which pure liquors (soft and strong) were to be dispensed at reasonable rates, under Christian management, would improve the morals of the community while at the same time realizing its promoters about six per cent on their money outlay. Many approved of these prayer-opened saloons, others disapproved, considering them as a compromise with evil. The experiment did not succeed, and was finally given up. It was while these subway taverns were running, in 1904, that the following verses were written.

I am, let me say, a square man ;  
 Well, at least I am a "Fair" man.  
 At Mt. Holly and at Trenton when the leaves begin to fall,  
 And the frost is on the pumpkins,  
 It is then the country bumpkins  
 Flock around my booth, for O! I am the idol of them all.

I at times like much to frolic  
 With my customers bucolic,  
 And adown the pike with them I very often promenade :  
 I tip them on all the races,  
 After which I seek those places  
 Known as consecrated bar-rooms, where I call for *lemonade*.

When I thus am out a-drinking,  
 Should I happen, without thinking,  
 To vibrate my optic-lid while ordering tea or some such drink,  
 I feel sure that Preacher Hotair  
 Would not blame me, for he's got a  
 Lot of sense and knows, like me, the worth of a sub-rosa wink.

Winking surely has its uses :  
 Yes, it frequently produces  
 Favors from a pretty woman or a bartender when we  
 Do not wish that those about us  
 Should have any cause to doubt us  
 When we preach, as oft we do, on virtue and sobriety.

TO E—— W—— W——.

O! believe me, Stella Peeler,  
 There are moments when I feel a  
 Very strange kind of sensation in the region of my heart.  
 Is it love or indigestion?  
 Pray, do not evade the question:  
 I am dying for the knowledge you—you only—can impart.

It is not, I know, the fashion  
 For a Poetess of Passion  
 To give serious attention to a query such as mine:  
 But a case like like this, revealing  
 Such intensity of feeling,  
 Cannot fail to draw from you at least one sweet and soulful line.

---

## LINES

TO A—— L—— T——.

Have they for us poor rhyming dubs  
 A private graveyard, Mr. Nubbs,  
 Where, when we've been laid out with clubs,  
 They take and plant us, Mr. Nubbs?

---

## WAS IT WRONG?

Maud sang a song most sweetly. Was it wrong  
 To call it, as I did, a *Maud-lin* song?

A critic once said I wrote trash :  
The remark cut my soul like a lash.  
    But then what the deuce  
    Need I care for abuse,  
When my rhymes (sometimes) bring me in cash?

My artistic soul is not quite  
So sensitive now to a slight :  
    I no longer quail  
    When press censors rail  
At the verses I venture to write.

If an editor happens to kick  
Me down stairs or hurl at me a brick,  
    When upon him I call,  
    I don't mind it at all ;  
I the next time mail my limerick.

---

LOVE'S SACRIFICE.

O ! I could die rhyming for Maud.  
Indeed, if my death would afford  
    Her joy, I'd not stop  
    These lines till I'd drop  
Stone dead on the green grassy sward.

---

WHAT LOVE CAN DO.

In all crimes he was deeply dyed ;  
    He had, in fact, no character ;  
He gambled, drank, swore, stole and lied,  
    Until he happened to see her.

And she reformed the man, and then  
    He married her, yes, and in time  
Became a useful citizen,  
    And made a living writing rhyme.

I really do not feel  
 I am any one's ideal.  
 No woman ever yet regarded me  
 As something to adore.  
 I cannot state, therefore,  
 Exactly what a hero's traits should be.  
 To be the ideal of  
 The girls—to have them love  
 And idolize you might suit some first-rate.  
 Such popularity  
 Does not appeal to me:  
 It would disturb my mind's quiescent state.

---

## SOLICITOUS INQUIRIES.

How's your terpsichorean toe?  
 Twirlish as usual, Miss Pitcoe?  
 Do you play diabolò?  
 Tell me, tell me, Miss Pitcoe.  
 How about your latest beau—  
 Does he please you, Miss Pitcoe?  
 If you scorned him would he blow  
 Out his brains then, Miss Pitcoe?  
 If he did, ah! then how ro-  
 Mantic 'twould be, Miss Pitcoe.  
 Well, at rhyming I'm not slow;  
 Do you doubt it, Miss Pitcoe?  
 Oh! forever I could go  
 On like this for Miss Pitcoe.  
 Any individual, though,  
 Might rhyme thus for Miss Pitcoe.  
 My heart's in it: hence this flow  
 Of verse is easy, Miss Pitcoe.  
 Lest in it I put also  
 My foot, I'll stop now, Miss Pitcoe.

Unlike Austin, I'm no wearer  
Of the laurel, but whene'er a  
Girl as lovely as is Sarah  
Asks for rhymes I can't decline  
Her request. Nay, I'm no poet,  
My lines very plainly show it,  
Yet, like this, though, I can go it  
For that dear sweetheart of mine.

Where can there be found a rarer  
Little beauty than my Sarah?  
O! there never lived a fairer  
Girl nor one quite as divine.  
I could, were I but a rhymer  
Like "Rud" Kipling, write sublimer  
Lines than these at any time or  
Place for that sweetheart of mine.

---

FAIR FLOSSIE.

I walk aimlessly to and fro  
On the street, knowing not where to go :  
Alone in the crowd  
My soul cries aloud  
For a star—aye, for Flossie Friskoe.

From Roxboro to Buffalo  
'Twere hard to find any one so  
Alluringly sweet  
And so dainty and neat  
As the far-famed fair Flossie Friskoe.

I know a very bright  
 And winsome Camdenite,  
 She's kind and true and ne'er a duty shirks.  
 I likewise know of one  
 Dear girl in Kensington,  
 Who 'mid the looms in that mill-district works.

And O! I know a third  
 Sweet thing, and she's a bird  
 Of gorgeous plumage; she, of course, is found  
 Across the Schuylkill, where  
 The fairest of the fair  
 Do, as some judges seem to think, abound.

At times I think most of  
 My Kensingtonian love,  
 But oft I pine for her who lives more west.  
 Occasionally I  
 For Camden's goddess sigh.  
 I don't know which of these girls I like best.

---

#### A CONSIDERATE MAN.

If the angels should happen to hear  
 Me sing, I have reason to fear  
     It would cause them to weep:  
     So I frequently keep  
 Very still, just to spare them a tear.

---

#### MILTON.

The epics and odes I compose  
 Are not as fine, some think, as those  
     Milton wrote. Well, John has  
     Done some real good work, as  
 His "Paradise Lost" clearly shows.



When I play poker stakes are low.  
Am I too weak-nerved, Miss Slimcoe?

I could of course say *high*, but O!  
There'd be no rhyme then, Miss Slimcoe.

In poetry one must oft forego  
Telling the real truth, Miss Slimcoe.

I don't mean *lie*: O! dear me, no.  
Just—er—*dissemble*, Miss Slimcoe.

One's art (mine's verse!) demands, you know,  
Such sacrifices, Miss Slimcoe.

Consign me, pray, to Jericho  
If my verse bores you, Miss Slimcoe.

Before you bid me thither go  
Smile once upon me, Miss Slimcoe.

Frown—and I'm "broke"; but smile, and lo!  
The world is mine then, Miss Slimcoe.

Your smile 'mid purgatorial woe  
I shall remember, Miss Slimcoe.

That smile, whene'er recalled, will throw  
Me into transports, Miss Slimcoe.

Ah! then the very imps below  
Will envy me, fair Miss Slimcoe.

My! that sounds very much like Poe.  
Do you not think so, Miss Slimcoe.

The world assuredly doth owe  
Much to *us poets*, Miss Slimcoe.

We serve to—er—uplift, you know,  
Humanity, fair Miss Slimcoe.

We find it hard in doing so  
To pay our board-bills, Miss Slimcoe.

Why, as a rule, are poets so  
Impecunious, Miss Slimcoe?

To wallow, as it were, in "dough"  
Is not for us: nay, Miss Slimcoe.

Ah! how to love is all we know:  
To love—and suffer, Miss Slimcoe.

Love—no, I'll close now else you'll grow  
Aweary of me, Miss Slimcoe.

Then, mayhap, you will not bestow  
The smile I covet, Miss Slimcoe.

---

OPERA PASSES.

When I (which is seldom) secure  
A pass for the opera, I'm sure  
    To then patronize,  
    As you may surmise,  
The show—that is, if it is pure.

Sometimes I discover, alas!  
That certain shows are not first-class.  
    I should such shows shun;  
    But politeness bids one  
Accept and make use of a pass.

A bright lemon or a light lime  
 To bards who live in the limelight  
 Should be given when they write rhyme,  
 Provided, of course, they rhyme right.

Skilled seamstresses swiftly sew seams.  
 A clever line—yes, it seems so.  
 I'd be foolish if I dreamt no dreams,  
 For there's so much that I—in dreams—know.

Dream knowledge is rot—this term we  
 Well use. Work gains the goal we term  
 Success; if alert and firm, the  
 Goal's won. No, I'm not in *the firm*.

This silliness I should forego,  
 Else those whom it shocks might go for  
 My scalp. No doubt I'd have more show  
 If of common sense I show more.

---

#### AT THE LUNCH COUNTER.

"What would you like?" "Like! A beefsteak  
 And some champagne, but they're too dear;  
 'Twere best to ask 'what will you take'.  
 Waiter, bring me some krout and beer."

Life is so serious that it  
 Might not be right to jest like this;  
 But yet sometimes a little bit  
 Of nonsense may not be amiss.

And truths are often said in jest.  
 A moral might be drawn here:  
 'Tis this—that life may be found blest  
 By those who order krout and beer.

This is a true tale of  
A youth who fell,  
Alas! too much in love  
With a young belle.

The belle was rich; her Pa  
Was proud, therefore  
He kicked the poor youth far  
From his front-door.

The youth, though poor, was game;  
With courage rare  
He limped away; became  
A millionaire.

Returned in after years  
To the homestead;  
His parents were in tears,  
They thought him dead.

He bought them autocars,  
An aeroplane,  
Steam yachts, high-grade cigars,  
Tuns of champagne.

And then he thought awhile  
Of *her*, and all  
His love came back. Gads! I'll  
Pay her a call.

By that door from which he,  
Ten years ago,  
Darted so hurriedly,  
Helped by Pa's toe,

He stood; this time no fear  
His mind oppressed;  
He clasped at last her dear  
Form to his breast.

Papa came in, he seemed  
Now reconciled;  
Forgave the youth, and beamed  
Upon his child.

"Accept," the father said,  
"My blessing, pray."  
These two fond souls will wed  
Without delay.

The verses hereabouts may be  
More frivolous than those elsewhere,  
Yet of life's stern reality  
The writer is full well aware.

Inclined to take then, as he is,  
Grave views of life, some readers here  
Might pause and marvel; surely his  
Apparent levity seems queer.

And yet why queer? Have not grave men  
Indulged in quips? Do jests denote  
A care-free mind? One may joke when  
He grasps a knife to cut his throat.

No reader therefore should suppose  
That he who writes thus carelessly  
Has steered clear of all earthly woes.  
Life is, he knows, no comedy.

No comedy! True, very true.  
But why be downcast? Why assume  
That it is wrong and sinful to  
Laugh as we journey towards the tomb.

When our risibilities  
Are moved there is no harm in laughter.  
Laugh then, in this life, when we please;  
We may not get a chance hereafter.

Not mirth-provoking are these quips,  
To read them may not be worth while;  
Yet to some reader's kindly lips  
Perhaps they'll bring a passing smile.

If they do not, no harm is done—  
No harm, save just some misspent time  
Expended on some so-called fun  
Expressed in alleged forms of rhyme.

That certain readers will not quite  
 Endorse some of my views I know ;  
 And yet these same views others might  
 Think perfectly *comme il faut*.

[I like to get off a French phrase ;  
 With many folks this makes a hit ;  
 Though when from one's own tongue one strays  
 One's apt to put his foot in it.]

This parenthetical clause excuse.  
 Ere thus digressing I meant to  
 Have asked, when some oppose the views  
 Others think right, what should one do.

Why to the Grundys of the earth  
 Should we so cravenly defer ?  
 Why stifle at their very birth  
 The sentiments that in us stir ?

When one is seized with an idea,  
 Whose propagation seems to be  
 Essential to mankind, why fear  
 To give it full publicity ?

Should one be dumb because one knows  
 That thoughts, when uttered, oft offend ?  
 By this course one might make no foes,  
 But would it tend to gain a friend ?

---

### STRANGE.

Sometimes, despite all that I do  
 To versify in a way to  
     Delight judges who  
     My stanzas review,  
 I fail. This seems strange, but 'tis true.

A brilliant thought occurred to me one day,  
 But O! I failed to note it on a pad;  
 Later the thought passed from my mind away,  
 I now cannot recall it, hence I'm sad.

Yet why should I my loss so deprecate?  
 The thought, indeed, was brilliant and sublime,  
 But to the world I could—I'm free to state—  
 Never present it in becoming rhyme.

Of what use is a thought when it can not  
 Be given to the world? Yet there's no great  
 Dearth now of thoughts; the jaded world has got  
 More now than it can well assimilate.

---

SUPPLIED.

I have a space to fill  
 With rhyme, it needs but two  
 Short stanzas, yet these will  
 Be difficult to do.

In vain I cudgel my  
 Brains for a thought or two;  
 The needed stanzas I  
 Cannot—ah! these may do!

---

THE NON-ESSENTIALITY OF THOUGHT IN  
 THE CONSTRUCTION OF POETRY.

Thinking is not conducive to  
 Perfection and sublimity  
 When writing verse; my "impromptu"  
 I wrote almost unconsciously.

Yes, often when I scarcely tried  
 I've written with surprising grace.  
 Mark the rare beauty of "Supplied",  
 Which I dashed off to fill some space.



The lines in this book indicate  
 That I am no real poet, yet  
 Despite the fact, I perpetrate  
 Sometimes an ode or triolet.

At least I try but don't succeed  
 In perpetrating odes ; and hence,  
 As I am guiltless, there's no need  
 To charge me, then, with an offense.

Sins of commission seem worse than  
 Those of omission ; in law none  
 Is held a culprit who doth plan  
 A crime, if that crime be not done.

One's deed is judged but not one's will ;  
 Yet the will may, in point of fact,  
 Be reprehensible, but still  
 The world notes but the overt act.

Yet, in a sense, those who fail to  
 Perform the evil they devise  
 Are no whit better than those who  
 Do wrong. But then why moralize?

---

'T WAS NEVER MEANT.

'Twas never meant that I should be  
 Quite as imperious and great  
 As Cæsar, but I live, and he  
 Is dead ; so I'll not rail at fate.

It's really good to be alive,  
 For life is pleasant after all.  
 Death waits us, still we may derive  
 Some joy here ere he pays his call.

When I left my alma mater, I mean the public-school,  
 Which I attended for a term, the future then to me  
 Looked very bright; no ripple stirred life's calm and tranquil pool.  
 This third line may mean nothing, but I like its euphony.

Nor drink nor dissipation, (very few wild oats I sowed),  
 But rhyme it was that floored me—yes, 'twas chiefly rhyme no  
 doubt.

Let those young men now journeying on life's hope-lighted road  
 Take warning, or their later days may find them down and out.

If I cherished fond ambitions in those days now gone by,  
 If I e'er hoped to gain—which may have been the case one  
 time—

Success in business life, those hopes of mine were wrecked when I  
 That fatal day first plunged into the whirling stream of rhyme.

Perhaps not rhyme alone has cast me on the shoals of fate;  
 My obtuseness, probably, and lack of business qualities,  
 Combined with certain other failings, managed to frustrate  
 My plans, and I am now a derelict upon life's seas.\*

But ne'ertheless 'twas chiefly rhyme that brought me, as I've said,  
 To what I am; and so again I would advise young men,  
 Who wish success, to cut out rhyme and give their time instead  
 To something else—say business; they'll all be successful then.

---

## A TRIBUTE TO WOMEN.

Women are not at the bottom of all folly and all crime;  
 It is unjust to say that they drive many men to drink.  
 Believe me, it was not a woman that brought me to rhyme.  
 To blame the sex for our delinquencies is wrong I think.

In those early days of youthhood it was not a woman whose  
 Ripening charms bewildered and inflamed my soul and brain.  
 No woman ruled my will when first I called upon the Muse,  
 But her power subsequently I, alas! could not restrain.

\* EDITOR'S NOTE.—Poets are apt sometimes to express themselves too hyperbolically. The author's present condition is not, we believe, as bad as might be inferred from this poem, yet his warning to young men was doubtless given in all sincerity, for the lines appear to have been written with much earnestness.

## ETERNITY.

Eternity means—er—well, I  
Can't fathom it, so I'll not try.

It is a mystery  
That is too deep for me,  
And so into it I shan't pry.

An abler man in my stead  
Should tackle the subject, and shed  
Some light on the same,  
And thereby gain fame.  
I'm sleepy, let me go to bed.

Yes, I'll stop ; for it doesn't look well  
On a theme of this import to dwell  
Thus lightly ; they'll say  
I am flippant, which may  
Prove a charge rather hard to repel.

---

 I DO NOT KNOW.

I wonder, were I to drop dead,  
(This is not funny—don't think so)  
Would any tears for me be shed.  
I do not know, I do not know !

---

 FOOLISHNESS.

Am I foolish? Well, say, sir, in the  
Core of that heart which throbs now in me  
There's a secret—a dear  
One, which makes life appear  
So sweet. Am I foolish? Maybe.

*An acknowledgment of the return of some manuscripts rejected because of their "unavailability".*

My rhymes he remorselessly spurns.  
I wish I could write like Bob Burns,  
Or like Byron or Moore;  
But I can't, and therefore  
Those verses of mine he returns.

When one does the best that he can  
Is he any less of a man?

Is he less of a bard  
If to rhyme he tries hard?  
Why then put him under the ban?

"A man's a man"—but in this note  
It were worse than useless to quote.

It seems "The Bulletin"  
Has for me "got it in,"  
Notwithstanding what Bobbie Burns wrote.

But I jest. There are editors who  
Are kindly. I know one or two.  
I don't, let me add,  
Feel slighted or sad  
Because *some* of my rhymes would not do.

---

#### THE MIND

I could, if I had the mind to,  
Write like Austin and Kipling. How true  
This is. Yes, I find  
That I have not the mind,  
Which is needed, to write as they do.

However, I'm somewhat consoled  
By knowing these two brave and bold  
British poets are quite  
Unable to write  
As I do: this truth should be told.

## A COLD WORLD.

The world presents me no bouquets;  
'Tis evidently unaware  
That I write lyrics, odes and lays;  
Or if it knows, it doesn't care.

No rhymes of mine have ever yet  
Inspired men to sing my praise;  
I never, I may say, have set  
The Thames or Delaware ablaze.

Fame seems remote; the chance of my  
Achieving it is slim indeed.  
Sometimes I really think that I  
Was never born to succeed.

I'm not quite crushed though; dreams somehow  
Sustain me. Don't scoff; life's rough ways  
Are smoothed by dreams; in them my brow  
Is bedecked by belated bays.

The world may probably get wise  
To my rare gifts one of these days;  
'Twill then on me, so I surmise,  
Bestow innumerable bouquets.

---

## AN OPTIMIST.

I may be very happy yet,  
Or I may not; this doubt I find  
Affects me not; I never let  
A doubt disturb my tranquil mind.

The world that seems inclined to damn  
My verses now, may sometime praise  
Me for the same; and hence I am  
Not pessimistic these sad days.

I am an optimist, you see.  
Why, if I knew there were but woe  
Aud suffering in store for me,  
I'd be no pessimist, I know.

*With apologies to Thomas Moore.*

Alone near the City Hall limps a poor bard,  
 In seedy habiliments he is attired;  
 His heart aches, his frame too; his lot is most hard;  
 From an editor's sanctum he has just been "fired".

He had the temerity therein to show  
 Some verses on spring, whereupon—but not here  
 Need the rest be related; to drown now his woe  
 He steps in a saloon and there orders a beer.

"Oh! blest be this beer, and in memory oft  
 May it sparkle in dreams!"—Having got off this bit  
 Of sentiment, he, for a place that is soft,  
 Looks around so that he with some comfort might sit.

The poet is gone—but he ne'er will forget,  
 When at home he shall talk of the dangers he's known,  
 To tell, with a sigh, what "endearments" he met  
 When he strayed in that Editor's sanctum alone.

---

 ANTICIPATION.

Anticipating things is more  
 Delightful, so they state,  
 Than realizing them; therefore  
 Let me anticipate.

In dreams I'll find my greatest bliss—  
 In dreams that cannot be  
 E'er realized by me in this  
 Life or eternity.

*Written on my fifty-sixth birthday.*

If I live but a few years more—  
Which I intend to do—  
I shall be sixty: just three score  
Of years! Tol-rol-lol-loo!

When I was in the twenties I  
Thought not I would live to  
Be fifty-six years, which is my  
Age now. Tol-rol-lol-loo!

Life is, as cases like this teach,  
Uncertain; yes, look you,  
I may the age of ninety reach.  
Who knows? Tol-rol-lol-loo!

The longer one lives the more he  
In knowledge grows. How true!  
Doubtless when ninety I will be  
Most wise. Tol-rol-lol-loo!

Still I'm not foolish now. O! no.  
Nor cynical; he who  
Reads 'tween my lines will not think so.  
Not much. Tol-rol-lol-loo!

---

POLITENESS PAYS.

"Your money or your life" said he;  
I really liked not this request,  
But, as he had the "drop" on me,  
I—well, I did not quite protest.

My pocketbook and watch and chain  
I handed him that darksome night.  
"Thanks, sir," he said, "you may retain  
Your life". Now wasn't he polite?



Too many rhymes I have in my  
 Book introduced. Who'll read them o'er?  
 I've cut out much, but no doubt I  
 Should have eliminated more.

This is a busy age, and few  
 Have time to read much poetry:  
 'Tis quality which appeals to  
 Judicious men—not quantity.

One's offsprings—I mean of the brain—  
 [Malthus need not be quoted here]  
 Should be curtailed; bards should restrain  
 Themselves. One ode's enough a year.

Why not, some may ask, practice what  
 You preach. An Elegy like Gray's  
 Should be produced, and not a lot  
 Of unimportant roundelays.

Well, I would slaughter all of those  
 Poor weaklings—my brain's progeny—  
 If afterwards I could compose  
 One—one immortal elegy.

But, hang it all! withhold your blame.  
 I do my best; can one do more?  
 If I e'er had a dream of fame,  
 That dream—ah well! that dream is o'er.

There is now, yes, now in my heart  
 And brain a song the world would class  
 As worthy; but I've not the art  
 Of uttering that song, alas!

I marvel greatly to hear of  
 A man committing suicide  
 Because a woman he may love  
 Refuses to become his bride.

Were I in love and she whom I  
 Adored disdained to be my wife,  
 I probably might heave a sigh,  
 But I would hardly take my life.

I would no cup of poison drain,  
 Nor would I cut my throat, nor yet  
 Blow out my brains. The girl's disdain  
 I would endeavor to forget.

Time, the great healer, would perchance  
 In due course my mind's grief assuage,  
 And in another love's romance  
 I might have spirit to engage.

#### L'ENVOI.

"He jests at scars, that never felt a wound."—Shakespeare.

But I've ne'er loved! I speak, no doubt,  
 Too lightly of love's pangs. I'm one  
 Who, if rejected, might blow out  
 His brains—or try to—with a gun.

---

#### PLAINLY PERCEPTIBLE.

'Tis patent, obvious and clear  
 That Homer, Milton, and Shakespeare,  
 And Keats,  
 Were all great geniuses. Who  
 But of their ilk could with words do  
 Such feats?

Yet none of those famed bards could write  
 Like this; some credit, then, I quite  
 Deserve.

In a strict rhythmic sense, I'm not  
 A genius; I've simply got  
 A nerve.

It certainly begins to look  
As though friend Peary and friend Cook  
Are not quite able to control  
Themselves when speaking of the Pole.

Friend Peary broadly intimates  
That Doctor Cook prevaricates.  
It really isn't very nice  
Thus to throw mud, or rather ice.

Now when the doughty Commodore  
Went forth the north-wilds to explore,  
When he his home delights forsook,  
He reckoned not with Doctor Cook.

And Cook forestalled him, so it seems ;  
Poor Peary's fond, ambitious dreams  
Of being the first man to look  
Upon the Pole were smashed by Cook !

Well, 'tis the irony of fate.  
Now Peary, in a jealous state,  
Rails at his luck and, with a hook,  
Would drag from fame's niche the bold Cook.

I hate, I do, upon my soul,  
To see this hero of the Pole  
Act thus. There's room in Glory's Book  
Both for friend Peary and friend Cook.

Peary indeed was justified  
 In saying Cook the faker lied.  
 At first I thought the term too strong ;  
 I chided Peary ; I was wrong.

The brave Commander could not brook  
 The antics of mendacious Cook,  
 And in his righteous wrath he tore  
 Away the mask the mummer wore.

And now this Cook, or rather Crook,  
 This lying wretch, who undertook  
 To spread on earth a wild canard,  
 Is hoisted by his own petard.

We turn with loathing from a scar  
 To gaze upon a lustrous star.  
 The world, O ! Peary, would extol  
 Thee—God's sole man who found the Pole.

Commander, the world's people now  
 Would wreath with laurel thy brave brow.  
 Accept our homage, daring one.  
 Thy life's work, Robert, is well done.

---

#### PERSONIFIED PERFECTION.

She can sharpen a pencil of lead,  
 She can hammer a nail on the head ;  
     She's a girl of rare sense,  
     She can swim, golf and fence,  
 She can sew, cook, bake pies and make bread.

She can motor, dance, sing, paint and draw :  
 She's a pearl in which there is no flaw.  
     And this paragon  
     (Ah ! are you not on ?)  
 Is, alas ! an ideal—nothing more.

These trivial  
 Dedicatory disquisitions  
 In introducing  
 Sundry Sunset Sonnets  
 Are  
 Fraternally forwarded  
 To the town's truly  
 Formidable Four  
 (Mrs. B, Miss P, Dr. B and Mr. P.)

Here in the town  
 I've jotted down  
 Some lines that may  
 A glance repay.  
 These, let me state,  
 I dedicate  
 To the Big Four  
 Now at the shore,  
 Inhaling there  
 The salt sea air  
 With its ozone  
 That gives a tone  
 Of vigor to  
 Those town folks who,  
 Not feeling well,  
 Go there to dwell  
 Awhile beside  
 The ocean wide.  
 I love to raise  
 My voice in praise  
 Of the deep blue;  
 To listen to  
 Its song to me  
 Is ecstasy;

It seems to stir  
 My soul, as 'twere.  
 A message of  
 A deathless love  
 To me it brings,  
 And my heart sings.  
 Yes, a wave's noise  
 Is of all joys  
 The—do I hear  
 A call for beer?  
 Yes, yes, I do;  
 'Tis true, 'tis true.  
 They beckon me  
 Now from the sea;  
 They say "come here  
 And have a beer!"  
 Yes, the Big Four  
*Wave* now and *roar*  
 An invite to  
 Schmidt's famous brew.  
 Most surely I'll  
 Be glad to "smile"  
 With the Big Four,  
 Whose *wave* and *roar*

\*These lines are introductory to the double acrostic entitled A Sunset on Corson's Inlet, on page 211.

I see and hear.  
 Me for the beer.  
 Farewell, O Sea,  
 Remember me.  
 Thee I adore,  
 But O, you Four!  
 When they say "beer"  
 Then life seems dear.\*  
 I must declare  
 That I'm glad their  
 Names are not long,  
 For I'd have strong  
 Reasons to shirk  
 Acrostic work  
 If their names were  
 Long. I prefer  
 Short names, therefore,  
 When I work o'er  
 Acrostics; yes,

I must confess  
 That for this sort  
 Of work the short  
 Names are the kind  
 I like to find.  
 But I digress;  
 Beer was, ah yes!  
 Just now my theme;  
 From it I seem,  
 Alas! to range.  
 How strange! how strange!  
 Now let me veer  
 Around to Beer.  
 If it were not  
 For beer one's lot  
 In life would be  
 A tragedy.  
 I find no fault  
 With Herr Schmidt's malt

\* A matter-of-fact reader of sumptuary sentiments and with prohibitive propensities should not allow himself (or herself) to become unduly horrified over the references to drink in this poem—the writer in this particular effusion is not to be taken too seriously. A versifier's rhapsodies should not be literally construed. A rhymers cannot be judged rightly by his compositions. This rhymers speaks very assertively here of various drinks; elsewhere, in different places, he expatiates just as dogmatically on love; the fact is, however, that he knows practically nothing about either drinking or loving, having in his time paid little if any attention to such things. He is as ignorant of one as he is of the other; neither seems to have ever greatly appealed to him; perhaps he has no capacity for either; he is, as may truly be said, a most abstemious bachelor. His prosaic avocation in life (that of a clerk and bookkeeper) never permitted him to acquire a true conception of those dangerous things—drinking and loving, nor yet of other things about which he nevertheless has not hesitated to rhyme. Hence when this rhymers after business hours discourses on wine, woman and song, on love, on theology, on sociology, on politics, on pugilism, etc., his opinions should not be accepted as authoritative. They are not the opinions of a man of the world—opinions based on experience, but are merely the imperfect deductions drawn from imaginative premises by a very circumscribed rhymers whose prime object is the slick turning of a tuneful rhyme rather than the promulgation of a living truth. Still truth, if looked for, may be found anywhere. Life flows into every nook and corner of the teeming world of to-day, and something of an ever-present mystery can everywhere be learned. Even in a busy office a plodding bookkeeper may be enabled to gather a fair knowledge of human nature. And so the abstemious bachelor believes that this seemingly vacuous poem of his, if rightly read, will, broadly speaking, prove conducive to general abstemiousness, though not perhaps to universal bachelorhood. Yes, the writer is pleased to think that here and there upon the pages of his book an attentive and patient reader may discern the glimmering of a truth—a truth gotten off intentionally by the writer in one of his occasional serious moods.



Extract; a stein  
 Of that divine  
 Concoction goes,  
 As one well knows,  
 Right to the spot.  
 O! does it not?  
 I don't refrain,  
 Sir, from champagne—  
 Not from "Mumm's dry",  
 O no! not I.  
 Fresh from the ice  
 It's very nice.  
 Yes, I well love  
 The product of  
 Those grapes so rich  
 And luscious which  
 Perfume the air  
 Of France; 'tis there,  
 Where the vine grows—  
 Yes, there in those  
 Romantic dales  
 That Love prevails;  
 Yes, it is there  
 On French soil, where  
 The grapes abound,  
 That love is found.  
 Love in la belle  
 France loves to dwell.  
 Love means more there  
 Than anywhere  
 Else on this small  
 Terrestrial ball.  
 That tale oft told—  
 So old, so old,  
 Yet ever new—  
 Seems there more true.  
 In sunny France  
 A girl's glad glance  
 And smiles are far  
 More glad than are

Such things elsewhere.  
 I have been there.  
 Yes, yes, in thought  
 Such things I've sought;  
 I've found them too,  
 As dreamers do.  
 Ah! here in town,  
 As I drink down  
 That sparkling wine,  
 What joys are mine!  
 O! life is sweet  
 When fond souls meet  
 And love—yes, e'en  
 In dreams, I ween.  
 So when I've quaffed  
 Love's true-born draught  
 I feel—I might  
 Say—a delight  
 I cannot well  
 In these lines tell.  
 The tongue and pen  
 Both fail us when  
 We would express  
 That happiness  
 We sometimes know  
 While here below.  
 When my joy's deep  
 I always keep  
 The stillest; yea,  
 The eyes convey  
 Our thoughts best when  
 We talk with men.  
 A silent toast  
 Affects me most.  
 The eyes, look you,  
 May waft as true  
 And eloquent  
 A sentiment  
 As any one  
 By words has done.



The soul's truth lies,  
 Sir, in the eyes.  
 O! is this, "Rude",  
 A platitude?  
 The other three  
 Agree with me.  
 "Jack," "Clara," "Rose,"—  
 Each of them knows  
 The eloquence  
 Of silence; hence  
 On this fact why  
 Enlarge? O! I  
 Am now too—well,  
 Too full to tell  
 My thoughts I fear.  
 (Too full of beer.)  
 But not I feel  
 Too full to deal  
 The cards aright.  
 I would tonight  
 Play, if I dare,  
 Some solitaire.  
 Out of the "pack",  
 Which holds a "Jack"  
 And also two  
*Right Bauers*, do  
 I pluck—a "Rose".  
 There surely grows  
 No fairer bloom  
 This side the tomb.  
 When roses in  
 June days begin  
 To blossom, then—  
 No, I again  
 Diverge, I fear,  
 Too far from beer.  
 I must not bore  
 The patient Four.  
 I must not stray  
 Again away

From my theme; let  
 Me, therefore, get  
 Back to the road  
 From which I strode.  
 Beer was, methinks,  
 And kindred drinks,  
 My theme. Excuse  
 My vagrant muse.  
 And now all hail  
 To good old ale.  
 This, many think,  
 Is a grand drink.  
 I'm fond of ale;  
 I like it pale.  
 Next—O what bliss!—  
 Is whiskey; this  
 Seductive booze  
 Who can refuse?  
 It is today  
 The world's mainstay.  
 My compass, though,  
 [This many know]  
 By which I steer  
 Life's barque is beer.  
 My chart, my guide,  
 My staff, my pride,  
 In this life here  
 Is beer, beer, beer.  
 Beer is my creed,  
 Beer—with a bead.  
 When much athirst  
 I swallow first  
 Some good old rye,  
 Then—yes, then I  
 Proceed to cheer  
 Myself with beer.  
 Rum, absinthe, gin  
 And brandy in  
 Right quantities—  
 I like all these.

Wine? Yes, for all  
 Kinds I oft call.  
 They all are fine,  
 But Beer for mine.  
 Beer every time.  
 Beer is sublime.  
 Porter and stout  
 Are, without doubt,  
 Drinks worthy of  
 Our deepest love.  
 This the Quartette  
 On the Inlet  
 Of Corson's will  
 Admit; but still  
 There is no drink  
 Like beer, I think.  
 We mortals here  
 Require beer.  
 Beer's what we need,  
 Beer—with a bead.  
 Our souls demand  
 Schmidt's *Ar* brand:  
 How heavenly  
 A brewery  
 Would seem beside  
 This—hic—this wide  
 Pulsating sea.  
 O!—hic—let's flee  
 To the—hic—bar,  
 It can't be far.  
 Let us repair  
 To the—hic—fair.  
 Tra, la, la—wow!  
 I'm happy now.  
 I feel—hic—feel  
 Just like the real  
 Thing, don't you know,  
 Only more so.  
 I, yes, I—gee!

But what ails me?  
 Retire? Pooh!  
 No. Damfido.  
 I'll paint instead  
 The Inlet red.  
 I'll serenade  
 Some nice young maid.  
 For you, my dear,  
 At this bar here,  
 A bar I will  
 Of music trill.  
 Is not the pun  
 A glorious one?  
 O, maiden pure,  
 Your eyes allure  
 My soul away  
 From its—hic—clay.  
 Love, let us fly;  
 The dawn is nigh—  
 She disappears.  
 Come, come, more beers!  
 Fair saint, I'll woo  
 Thee back, look you,  
 With Schmidt's—hic—say,  
 What ails me, pray?  
 I seem to grow  
 So—hic—yes, so  
 Er—so—hic—well  
 Say, what the hell  
 Makes my brain reel?  
 What makes me feel  
 So—hic—so queer?  
 Can it be beer?  
 Perish the thought!  
 I spose I ought,  
 Yes, I—hic—spose  
 I ought to close.  
 So long, Big Four.  
 Au—hic—revoir.

## 370 PHILADELPHIA'S POETICAL POLICE.

[A contest for the poet-laureateship of the police force was held, under the auspices of a Philadelphia newspaper, in the spring of 1910. Following are some unofficial dissertations by an onlooker at the tourney.]

Lo! Spring is here. We citizens  
Bask in those smiles of hers,  
Whilst reading odes fresh from the pens  
Of police officers.

Yes, we know more of spring, no doubt,  
Than e'er we knew before,  
Now that its charms are pointed out  
By guardians of law.

Music that breathes of love divine  
Now softly to us floats;  
Love, too, illumines every line  
That comes from our bluecoats.

Springtime and Love! What wondrous themes!  
Ah! every listening soul  
Is carried heavenward, it seems,  
In a—er—yes, "patrol".

It has been my most fervent prayer  
To reach that place so blest  
Where I might gain a rest, and where  
I might escape—arrest.

In Thomson's "Seasons" we delight.  
Of vernal joys and peace  
Thomson wrote well, but yet not quite  
As well as our police.

Though I am, when it comes to rhyme,  
Particularly dumb,  
I know when verses are sublime,  
And I know when they're bum.

Oft have I hung enraptured o'er  
A poet's masterpiece;  
Though I ne'er wooed the Muse like Moore,  
Or Keats, or—the police.

We cannot all be fav'rites of  
The Muse, but we can sing,  
As best we may, of Truth and Love,  
And Faith, and Hope, in spring.

We all know something of these things—  
The cop upon his beat,  
The clerk, the workman; each one sings,  
For each has found life sweet.

Some men find nought in rhyme, and they  
Disdain the rhymer, who  
Is but a spineless crank, they say.  
Is this impeachment true?

No, they who soar in airy flights,  
Without an aeroplane,  
Lack not in pluck. We laud the "Wrights";  
The poets why disdain?

They who preserve the law, who face  
Mad mobs, who stamp out crime,  
Who risk their lives,—'tis no disgrace  
For them to dip in rhyme.

So let them then, Director Clay,  
Have carte-blanche, as it were,  
To seek the comely Muse and pay  
Their best devoirs to her.

You might as well attempt to dam  
Niagara as to stop  
My rhythmic flights, although I am,  
As my lines show, no cop.

Men have, indeed, attempted to  
Damn me, yes, with faint praise.  
Nor dams nor damns, though, can subdue  
Me in mid-vernal days.

I wear no star; I'm but a rank  
Civilian, a mere dub.  
I can not wield the pen like "Frank",  
Nor, like him, wield the club.

I can't play (I'm not on the force)  
The game well, but I can  
Look on and pass remarks of course,  
Like any other fan.

With shouts and yells then of delight  
I greet the doughty bards.  
It is an intellectual fight—  
This Battle of the Guards.

At rhyming "Edward" is no mut;  
He understands the game;  
He's not quite up to Kipling, but  
He gets there just the same.

The victor of the pennant we  
May soon know. Will some dark  
Pegasus win, or will it be  
The War-horse of the Park?

Imperishable fame awaits  
The cop who wins the bays,  
Whether that cop perambulates  
Town-districts or park-ways.

Whoe'er the laureled one may be  
I, as becomes a fan,  
Shall rise and root vociferously  
For this prize-winning man.

But how award the prize—yes, how?  
It might, perhaps, be well  
To place on each Miltonian brow  
A deathless immortelle.

[Apropos of some opinions advanced by certain local moralists as to the advisability of allowing managers of moving-picture shows to exhibit films which depict the defeat of a popular white prizefighter by a colored opponent.]

The fight films should not be allowed;  
We must let no kinetoscope  
Show how a negro whipped the proud  
Caucasians' pet and only hope.

We will assume a pious air;  
Those who mistrust us we'll abuse;  
We'll beseech Heaven, and the Mayor,  
To stop these very wicked views.

Much is at stake—our pride, our race.  
Those pictures taken at Reno  
Must be suppressed; they're a disgrace.  
O! why did Jeffries fail us so!

Fight films shown ere our idol's fall  
Ne'er wounded so our righteous pride.  
On Heaven—and the Mayor—we call:—  
Save us from being mortified.

\* \* \* \* \*

Drop this false air of sanctity.  
Why fuss and fume so? You've no right  
To stop those who may wish to see  
This reproduction of the fight.

The "prestige" lost perhaps may be  
Regained in years to come, hence those  
Unlovely traits—hypocrisy,  
Cant, hate and envy—why disclose?

The grand Caucasian race need not  
Whine and despond so; it is by  
No means played out; it's simply got  
Just now a palpable black eye.

July, 1910.

\* The heated discussions and general lawlessness throughout the country following upon the prizefight at Reno, Nev., on July 4th, 1910, prompted this and the four other poems succeeding *Precipitous Praise* on next page.

We should not enthuse, as we do,  
 O'er living celebrities who  
     Pose within the limelight.  
 They're all apt—black and white—  
 To backslide ere with life they are through.

Dead men cannot do any wrong.  
 Let's wait then—our wait won't be long—  
     For our heroes to die;  
     When they're safe in the sky  
 We can praise them in story and song.

November, 1912.

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### DOPE.

"Apology is only egotism wrong side out."  
     —Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Dope, now say some apologists,  
     Knocked out the white man's only hope;  
 It was not Johnson's mighty fists,  
     But it was dope—yes, it was dope.

Upon the third day of July  
     Johnson could not with our man cope;  
 Jack floored Jim twice and blacked Jim's eye  
     Because Jim on the Fourth took—dope.

Was it Jack's confidence and vim,  
     His pluck, strength, skill and science? Nope.  
 He whipped our idol because Jim,  
     On Independence Day, took dope.

Our Jim was nervous we admit,  
     Not frightened—no, but he would mope,  
 And so to soothe him just a bit  
     We gave him—perhaps—too much dope.

Well, well, the white race need not be  
     Cast down nor in gloom's dark slough grope;  
 We'll trot out Jim again when he  
     Has gotten o'er this case of "dope(?)".

July, 1910.



The account of an actual incident, and one of many similar occurrences that took place in our city and other American cities on this particular anniversary (the 134th) of the Nation's birthday. These lines describing the incident (an unprovoked assault on a twelve-year-old colored boy by a crowd of white lads whose ages ranged from twelve to seventeen years) are respectfully dedicated to the kind lady who so opportunely came to the tormented boy's assistance and who cared for and comforted him in his distress.

On Independence Day, along  
One of our streets, there walked a child ;  
This child was doing nothing wrong,  
Save that at times he paused and smiled.

The child was colored. Not "Jack's" feat—  
No, something else amused the boy ;  
He smiled ; some hoodlums on the street  
Observed the youngster's look of joy.

The look enraged those roughs, and so  
To wipe away the deep disgrace  
Brought on them that day in Reno  
By one who championed their race,

They fell upon and kicked and beat  
The black child who was passing by,  
And who dared on an up-town street  
To smile on the Fourth of July !

"On earth, O ! God, Thy kingdom come."  
Thus here in "Christendom" we pray.  
But none can find in heathendom  
Such crimes as shame our land today.

We talk about "converting" dumb  
And sinful foreign heathens. Why  
Not convert our town's vile scum ?  
Say, is the task too hard to try ?

July, 1910.

With some side reflections on the intolercancy evinced by certain chauffeurs in their adoption of racetrack discrimination rules.

Your vict'ry, Jack, has not been vain;  
You've shown the world, sir, by your feat  
That in pure muscle, as in brain,  
The black race need take no hind-seat.

Think! there are creatures sunken so  
In the world's slime as to grudge Jack  
The laurels he won at Reno.  
And why? Because God made him black!

Perhaps God should have made us of  
One color—white, all white. I'm quite  
Sure, though, that to obtain His love  
We're not required to be white.

Some other things are requisite—  
Character, honor, purity.  
But some men haven't got the wit  
To understand how this may be.

Black! The dark color of Jack's skin  
Is an excuse; they who decline  
To race with him fear he will win,  
And so they draw the "color line".

In a fair fight or auto race  
Few white men dare meet boxer Jack.  
Some low poltroons say 'twould disgrace  
Their "calling" to cope with a black.

How utterly absurd and how  
Contemptible are all those who  
In the brave world of true sport now  
Object to a man's racial hue.

\* Arthur has apparently fallen from grace; charges affecting his character are made as this book goes to press. These charges, though they may not be substantiated, are regarded by the general public as well founded. The writer composed this series of five poems in July, 1910, being then entirely unsuspecting, of course, of Johnson's moral waywardness; the recent charges brought against the noted pugilist suggested the short limerick poem, entitled *Precipitous Praise*, on page 374.

Had surly Jeffries won the scrap  
The nation's white-skin hoodlums then  
Would keep their grimy hands, mayhap,  
From off the colored citizen.

Our country is disgraced no doubt,  
More by the vile, insane and low  
Race spite now shown than by the bout  
As lately pulled off in Reno.

As for the pictures—well, 'twill be  
No sin to view them; yet if they  
Cause fools to act disorderly,  
The Mayor will stop the film display.

I take (as probably one ought)  
In worldly happenings a bit  
Of interest, though I am no sport,  
Nor—I may say—a hypocrite.

July, 1910.

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### THE COLORED RACE.

As pugilists few white men are  
In Johnson's class; and how few whites  
Can mount, like the late Paul Dunbar,  
Fair Poesy's sun-flooded heights.

And Washington, yes, Booker T.—  
The student, thinker, sage—has done  
A work that shows his race to be  
In brain and brawn a worthy one.

Yet there are men with souls so small  
As to begrudge the boxer Jack,  
The scholar Booker and dead Paul  
Their laurels. Why? These three are black!

Black? Yes, at least two of them are;  
The other—well, if saints be fair,  
Then in yon heaven Paul Dunbar  
Is now as white as any there.

Black! 'Tis not their fault. Why defame  
Therefore the boxer, sage or bard?  
To be consistent we should blame  
The One who made them, that is—God.

Yet worth, not color, counts the most  
With Him who made us; why then slight  
Our darker brother, and why boast  
And brag and gloat because we're white?

That race, from many human rights  
And privileges now debarred,  
May on life's course outstrip the whites,  
And gain the favor of their God.

Some scientists think this may be,  
Though theologians protest.  
Well, doctors of divinity  
Are wise; they probably know best.

Theology's not in my line,  
Nor can I be placed on the list  
Of scientists; I'm no divine,  
No bard, no anthropologist.

I am no savant, sage, nor wit,  
No sad recluse, no saint, no sport;  
But in most things I take a bit  
Of interest, as perhaps one ought.

I dip, just dip in things; I am  
A dilettante, one of those  
Whose worldly—no, none cares a damn  
What my life's work is, so I'll close.

July, 1910.

I always whoop her up a bit  
When our home teams score,  
Hence, when the Phillies make a hit,  
I shout and yell and roar.

I've not whooped much of late, but there  
May, in the way of ball,  
Be something doing later, ere  
The leaves begin to fall.

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## A PHYSICIAN OF THE MODERN SCHOOL.

AN UP-TO-DATE PRACTITIONER.

*Respectfully dedicated to Doctor ———.*

"The world's a stage," so says Shakespeare.  
'Tis true, we mortals are  
Mere mummers; though in life's play here  
I figure as a star:

A star, the world knows this full well,  
Whose light can ne'er decline;  
But, being modest, I shan't dwell  
Upon those deeds of mine.

I'll just state that my specialty  
Is—no, I should not brag;  
It ill becomes a famed M. D.  
To chew, as 'twere, the rag.

Yet proper self-respect constrains  
 Me to aver right here  
 That I for all men's aches and pains  
 Have a sure panacea.

I don't, when tending to the ill,  
 Prescribe, as most docs do,  
 A noxious drug or nauseous pill;  
 Nay, these things I taboo.

I merely etherize the guy  
 Who happens to be sick;  
 I take my scalpel next and try  
 On him my "little trick."

To put it more succinctly, for  
 I must not be prolix,  
 I simply from my patient draw  
 Forth his bum ap-pen-dix.

Later the patient, or else his  
 Executor, draws me  
 A check. Ah! nothing in life is  
 As precious as a fee!

---

## SYRACUSE SEMINARIANS

### AT A FOOTBALL GAME.

Several stunningly sweet sirens saw  
 Some strikingly spry students score.  
 Screams succeeded such skill.  
 Surely such sounds, so shrill,  
 Shook sunny Spain's sea-skirted shore.

I scorn them both—blonde and brunette.  
What matters shade or hue  
Of hair or eye? There ne'er breathed yet  
A woman who was true.

Women, aye, take it, sir, from me,  
Are false as well as weak;  
I've studied them most thoroughly;  
I know whereof I speak.

For her no wise man entertains  
A passing thought; none but  
A fool for her blows out his brains,  
Or his throat tries to cut.

The fact is, though, that men, all men,  
Are fools; not one is wise.  
We're apt to be most foolish when  
We gaze in women's eyes.

There is, I own it, a blonde girl,  
A real blonde, if you please,  
Who 'round her little thumb can twirl  
Me with consummate ease.

Soon I shall ask this blonde to be  
My dear and precious wife;  
If she declines, I'll probably  
Rush home and take my life.

---

### A JOY WE ALL MIGHT KNOW.

Have something to look forward to;  
'Tis pleasant to anticipate  
Good deeds; hence, when I've got to do  
A thing, I—well, procrastinate.

I've put off doing lots of things;  
I like to *think* about them so.  
I find anticipation brings  
A joy—a joy we all might know.



When I was a small lad  
 I wanted very bad  
 To be, when I grew up, a circus-clown,  
 Or a detective, or  
 A pirate who loved gore,  
 Or else a scout or actor of renown.

I am, though now of age,  
 No actor on the stage,  
 Nor clown, nor scout, nor sleuth who hunts down crooks,  
 Nor pirate on the seas;  
 No, I am none of these;  
 I'm in an office, down town, keeping books!

### A TRIBUTE TO LORD ALFRED TENNYSON.

Written on the fly-leaf of a copy of "In Memoriam" presented  
 to Miss L. C.

Britannia's famed Laure-ate  
 Rhymed well: he was certainly great  
 When he touched upon love:  
 But he knew nothing of  
 Limericks, it is saddening to state.

A good poet, though, was A. T.  
 He was greater perhaps than C. P.  
 But it's doubtful if this  
 Noble lord had the bliss  
 Of e'er knowing a girl like L. C.

Let those who o'er Alfred enthuse  
 Not proceed in their zeal to abuse  
 Poor C. P. Why resent  
 A fond sentiment  
 Of one who would here woo the Muse?

Ah! C. P. believes it is no  
 Sacrilege upon this page to show  
 His deep-rooted regard  
 For the Laureate Bard,  
 And for the fair L. C. also.

Written thirty years after *A Tribute to Alfred Tennyson*.

And so you met L. C. today.  
What! now Mrs. Brown? You don't say!  
    'Twas real nice of her  
    To ask if I were  
"Still living." How time glides away!

The years to one closely employed  
Pass quickly; life's May I enjoyed;  
    But such joys don't last,  
    December's shrill blast  
Now sounds. Youth's hopes soon are destroyed.

And L. C. —I mean Mrs. Brown,  
When told I still lived here in town,  
    Just smiled—smiled and said  
    She thought I was dead;  
This thought seemed not to cast her down.

I live—or, to speak properly,—  
Exist. O! it's pleasant to be  
    Remembered by one  
    For whom I have none  
But kind thoughts—I allude to "L. C."

To L. C. whose friendship I knew—  
A friendship enduring all through  
    A whole happy spring.  
    'Tis most comforting  
To think of a friendship so true!

Yes, C. P. still lives—still exists;  
Still draws breath, still keeps books, still persists  
    In rhyming a bit  
    When olden scenes flit  
Before him from out of life's mists.

(After the manner of Read, to whom probably, considering the circumstances, no apologies need be made.)

The time draws near  
When on the pier  
We'll wave, yet not without a tear,  
A farewell to  
Our Doro, who  
Is soon to sail the ocean blue.

She goes to France  
To eat, perchance,  
Frog-legs, and probably to dance  
And sing also ;  
For we all know  
That she is, so to speak, " not slow ".

Our Dorothy  
Will surely be  
A lioness in gay Paree.  
She will by her  
Rare graces stir  
The heart of Europe, I infer.

In France—la belle  
France—this town's well-  
Known star will for a season dwell.  
They'll sing her praise  
There these spring-days,  
And toast her in the swell cafés.

When Dorothy  
Has crossed the sea,  
There'll be but little joy for me  
In " the States " here ;  
I'll find, I fear,  
Life, without Doro, very drear.

Still I'll not quite  
 Despair: there's light  
 Amid the gloom. Hope's star, so bright,  
 Still shines; and we  
 Again may see  
 Our (ah yes! "our") Dorothy.  
 May 10, 1913.

---

 SHE'S BACK!

She's back again!  
 Ah! if my pen  
 Were but more facile I might then  
 With truer art  
 And skill impart  
 The news which now enthrills my heart.

I cannot state  
 In adequate  
 Verse-phraseology so great  
 A fact that she—  
 Our Dorothy—  
 Is back, though it means much to me.

Let others woo  
 The Muse, and to  
 A listening world reveal their true,  
 Deep thoughts, whilst I  
 Stand dumbly by,  
 Not daring to breathe e'en a sigh.

But O! sometime  
 In a far clime  
 My soul may, in immortal rhyme,  
 Exult and be  
 Forever free  
 To sing, to sing—for Dorothy!

Dear are the songs of youth! Ah, I  
One time was young! I sang in those  
Rare, sunny days, so long gone by,  
Of love—the love which glad youth knows:

The love that I no more shall know.  
How free those days were of all cares!  
Yet time can ne'er, with all its woe,  
Bedim the glory that was theirs.

A gracious, tender memory  
Uplifts my soul these later days.  
Earth still is beautiful; let me  
Rejoice, then, as I tread its ways.

---

#### LIFE'S EVENING.

Love's not for me! Why should I, then,  
In my life now love's strange cares bring?  
Let me be free—heart-free as when  
I trod life's ways in youth's bright spring.

Each one who plods earth's thoroughfares  
Knows of life's dangers; I've thus far  
Escaped its pitfalls and its snares.  
No heart, though, is without a scar.

Doubtless love's not for me, and yet  
A vision of a maiden, whom  
Long years ago I one time met,  
Lights up for me life's twilight-gloom.

A GRANDSON'S TRIBUTE TO HIS 387  
GRANDMOTHER.

SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY W. A. C.

When things go wrong and I feel blue,  
Who is it writes a billet-doux,  
Which really cheers me through and through?  
My Grandma.

Who is it thinks I'm truly great—  
Who seems, in fact, to estimate  
Me at my worth? I'm glad to state  
'Tis Grandma.

I have a lock of golden hair  
That I habitually wear  
Next to my heart: who placed it there?  
My Grandma.

Oft do I gaze upon that hair;  
The gift of one so sweet and fair,  
And also young, although I swear  
She's Grandma.

And when upon the road I go,  
With a new line of calico,  
That lock of hair uplifts the woe  
Which otherwise would crush me so.  
This is not strange: the hair, you know,  
Is Grandma's.

Now breathe it not, but I have, too,  
The picture of a maiden who  
Is very kind and very true,  
And loves me as all women do—  
'Tis Grandma's.

O precious picture! really I  
 (Believe me, this is not a lie)  
 Would rather—yes, much rather die  
 Than part with it: the reason why  
 Is this—the photo's that of my  
                     Dear Grandma.

Now women, I may say, are quite  
 Entrancing creatures, and I might  
 Enlarge upon this theme to-night,  
 Only I do not think it right:  
 For there's but one (she's out of sight)  
 Whose presence fills me with delight—  
                     That's Grandma.

Does dear Grandma reciprocate  
 My love? Why cert. At any rate,  
 She says so in her notes of late.  
                     Dear, kind Grandma.

So to the office at the end  
 Of each glad week my way I wend:  
 There, handed to me by a friend,  
 On whom I very much depend,  
 Are those sweet letters that are penned—  
                     By Grandma!



Lines to P \* \* \* \* \* L \* \* \* \* \*, Esq., member of the Academy of Natural Sciences, on receiving from him a copy of his treatise on Pamphila Aaronii.

Though I live adjacent to  
 "The Academy" I do  
 But rarely in that building show my "mug".  
 I am not down on the list  
 As an Entomologist:  
 I scarcely know the name of any bug.

They have no use for me  
 In that academy:  
 They don't want chumps who deal in sentiment.  
 If I called there they'd throw  
 Me quickly out I know,  
 For I am not a scientific gent.

I read, though, with delight  
 Your pamphlet, and I'm quite  
 Obligated to you for putting me so wise  
 To insect breeding: still  
 Some bugs I'd rather kill  
 Than breed—of course I don't mean butterflies.

---

### THESE DAYS.

I live near the Park Boulevard;  
 At any rate, I try real hard  
 These days to live there.  
 But to live anywhere  
 Is not easy these days—for a bard.

## 390 SOLUTION OF A CHESS PROBLEM.

Problem called the "Baby Elephant" appearing originally in the chess columns of "The Times", April 18, 1880.

BLACK.

	W K	B Kt					
W P	B P	W P	B P	B P	W P	B P	
B P	W R	B B	B K		B P	W P	B B
W R			W Kt	B R	W P	B P	W P
	W P		B P			W P	
			W Kt			W B	

WHITE.

White to play and mate in five moves.\*

### SOLUTION.

White, having move to make, with his good King should take  
 The Knight; now Black his King's Pawn pushes one;  
 Then quickly White doth bring to Queen's sixth square his King.  
 Next, Black's Pawn captures Pawn. Well begun!

Of much the "Baby's" shorn, for White takes Pawn with Pawn  
 The while Black views his third move with a sigh,  
 He needs must shove with care his King Knight's Pawn a square.  
 White smilingly sees victory is nigh;

He places, with delight, on King's fifth square his Knight.  
 Poor Black to make his fourth move sets about;  
 But O! what can he play! move Bishop where he may,  
 White's Knight will mate him next beyond a doubt.

\*The writer did not compose this problem, he wrote only the versified solution.  
 The name of the Problemist he is unable to recall.

## SOME DAY.

*Inscribed, with regards, to Walt Mason.*

It seems modest to enclose real verse in apparent prose: yet in headlines to declare that a poem is put there, worthy of a copyright, looks a little, at first sight, like a vain bard's ruse whereby he might catch the public eye. Still no harm's done. Why suppress one who strives to win success? All who would their wares purvey, bards as well as others, may label them as seems most wise, and their merits advertise. Surely advertising pays in these truly business days. Bards who advertise their wares may in time be millionaires: they their aims may best attain by denouncing sordid gain. Or the day that brings the dough they may hasten if they show, in some sad, sweet melody, the blest joys of poverty. Wealth and glory come to those who put poems within prose: but the poems must all be of the finest quality. The "Masonic" brand will win favor from "The Bulletin". I cannot, though, on demand, hand out this required brand; hence the coin and fame, that lure modern bards, I must abjure. 'Tis necessity constrains me herein; no one disdains coin and glory—not e'en those who put poems within prose. Coin it is—the bright coin of our realm that men most love. This, we know, some bards deny: well, these bards perhaps don't lie; they may be a truthful lot; then, again, they may be not. Coin and glory! Ah! some day they, perhaps, may come my way. Yes, I may amass sometime untold wealth by means of rhyme. Some day, some day, some sweet day things will likely come my way. I endeavor oftentimes to express my thoughts in rhymes, but the Muse, whose aid I ask, seldom helps me with my task: oft to my most frantic call she makes no response at all. Mister Mason does not find her so distant, so unkind. I am sure the Muse ne'er slights Mister Mason when he writes; she assists him in his tasks; in her gracious smiles he basks. I wish very frequently that she were as kind to me; not to have men reimburse me for copyrighted verse. No. Ah! perish such a thought. A bard's inspiration ought to be higher; he should aim to secure, not gold, but fame. Still I don't think I'd resent a proposed emolument for my verse; but I'm, alas! not in Mister Mason's class. Bards unfavored by the Muse must, perforce, life's prizes lose. It is hard, but ne'er-

theless I am cheered in my distress by the thought that probably Mister Mason pities me. No, I shall not call him "Walt"; he would doubtless call a halt on familiarity such as this from one like me. Mason—Mister Mason, I should observe here, that 'tis my sad misfortune, not my fault, that "she" snubs me. Ah! dear Walt (I mean Mister Mason), you feel for me, I know you do. But I am not kicking; there is no reason to despair. Hope is mine. A man who woos the fair but capricious Muse is not easily cast down; he may smile, though Fate may frown. Some day, some day, some sweet day things will likely come my way. Some day there will burst from me an entrancing melody whose sonorous notes will roll from the late discovered Pole to the farthest star, whose light has as yet not reached us quite. Then I, in immortal prose, may embody one of those grand, dear poems that, it seems, I compose in happy dreams. Ah, the world will marvel when I wield my inspired pen. Then beneath yon heaven's vault I'll hobnob with—yes, with Walt. The fair Muse impartially then will smile on Walt and me; strains of music from the spheres will be wafted to our ears, our voices blending free in the stellar symphony. O! we'll make the welkin ring with the songs that we shall sing. We will sing as ne'er before; from our souls the songs will pour. Ah! this whirling world will be ravished by our harmony. Men will wreath our brows with bays in the coming songful days. While the populace exalt our deeds I'll turn to Walt, and I'll say to him—Old boy, this life is a life of joy: yes, a life of joy, dear pard, to the one who is a bard. O! the rapture, O! the bliss, living in a world like this! Of all worlds in space it is far the happiest. I wis— \* \* \* \* But forgive me; it may be, Mister Mason, wrong for me thus to dream. Yet who will blame a poor wretch who dreams of fame? Sometime 'neath the bright blue skies we our dreams may realize. Sitting here among the gloom of a back third-story room in the night's deep solitude I write out these verses crude. But the gods some day may be, as I've said, more kind to me. Some day, some day, some sweet day things will likely come my way.

ADAM'S EXCORIATION OF POETS 393  
AND THEIR PRODUCTIONS.\*

*To the world at large.*

*Fellow-Mortals:*

I have no use for poets: their work indicates a nature too calculating for me to admire. They conceive a thought and with painful deliberateness sit down to present it according to set prosodical rules, not daring to disregard feet, rhyme, rhythm and other verse requirements. There is an artificiality about this business.

I prefer the free, unconventional manner with which a truly frank man expresses his sentiments. Poets don't seem to know when to let well enough alone; they continually try to improve an effusion after it has been sprung on an unsuspecting public. Quite a number of prominent poems have been revised more than once by their authors: this is tantalizing to those who purchase first editions.

Those engaged in the art of painting, sculpturing and the like are not in the habit, after their wares are on the market, of hunting them up with brush and chisel for the purpose of making alterations.

The example set by these artists should be followed by those who dabble in verse and who call their work an "art".

I am, my poor suffering fellow-mortals,

Very truly yours,

ADAM.

July 20, 1905.

---

AN ANSWER.

*To whom it may concern.*

*Dear Sir (or Madam—as the case may be):*

I am a poet (ahem!). Naturally I want to reply to the letter signed "Adam". I do not know how that letter will affect Austin, Kipling, Swinburne, Markham, Tubbs, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, James Whitcomb Riley and others of my contemporaries (ahem!), but it causes me to boil over with more or less indignation. It is true that we poets (*we poets*) sometimes make changes in our poems after they leave the press, but what of that. Homer,

\*This "Adam" epistle, it should be stated, was written by the rhymers themselves so as to provide a motive for the perpetration of the answering production which directly follows.



Shakespeare, Byron, Keats, Burns, Tennyson, Browning, Poe, Longfellow, Whittier and others in their day have occasionally revised their lines. I have revised mine; the practice may prove temporarily tantalizing to our living admirers, but posterity will be the gainer by inheriting our most polished and finished work. (Ahem!) "Adam" charges us (us, mind you) with being insincere. He actually intimates that we are temperamentally dishonest. O, this is too much! It is enough to drive a poet (and let me re-mention the fact that I am to be classed in that category); it is enough, I say, to drive a poet to profanity, or worse. It has driven me to worse—I mean to verse. Adam would perhaps not approve of my changing this word. It has not, though, driven me to profanity. Surely there is nothing in the last stanza of the following poem addressed to "Adam" that savors of profanity.

I don't hesitate to own  
That "Let well enough alone"  
Is a saying worth considering when tempted, as we are,  
To retouch some work supposed  
To be irrevocably closed,  
For in an attempt to better we are liable to mar.

A sculptor who would try  
To beautify his statue's eye  
By a supplemental clipping of the brow, may only make  
Matters worse: his extra toil  
Might the whole stone-image spoil.  
Hence for him an extra chiselling were a palpable mistake.

Take his brother artist, who  
In oils may really do  
A masterpiece that promises to bring fame for which he yearns:  
Yet, not satisfied, he takes  
Up his brush again, and makes  
An improvement which does not improve—as he too late discerns.

But the poet, O! the sad  
And dreamy poet! He may add  
Various verses to his piece and no one seems to care, "Adam".  
Yet rhyming's easy, and if my  
Verses are not read—well, I  
Shall have no reason to be sadder than I usually am.

Addressed to any one who may, whilst turning over the leaves  
of this volume of verses, happen to glance upon this page.

You who pick up this book of mine  
Are not obliged to read each line  
Therein; 'twere well  
To read some short poems, also  
The "Dedication"; don't dip, though,  
Into my "Hell".

Peruse your Dante; his style may  
Delight you more than my weak way  
Of treating so  
Delectable a place. If you  
Want something vigorous, read through  
His "In-fer-no".

We differ—I and Dante do—  
About the place we're going to  
Sojourn awhile.  
His views are fearsome; the "Divine  
Commedia" may scare you—mine  
May make you smile.

I do not aim to terrify.  
If I win but one smile then I  
Am satisfied.  
Yet I would not want to appear  
Too careless. I have (don't smile here)  
A serious side.

---

### ASTUTENESS.

A woman reader, who  
Looks the above lines o'er,  
May be moved by them to  
That "Hell" of mine explore.

Perhaps this was just why  
I wrote those "decoy" rhymes.  
Shrewd? Yes, but bards must try  
To get verse read sometimes.

Poets who are astute  
Know what "the sex" will do  
When warned 'gainst certain fruit,  
And certain verses too.



I'm working now, hence I'm not free  
To sing to any great extent.  
From now on in this world there'll be  
A dearth of rhythmic sentiment.

My harp upon the wall doth hang.  
Mute are those chords that used to throb  
Beneath my touch. I durst not twang  
The harp now; I must hold my job.

Yet the sad world should try to bear  
Its temporary loss of song.  
Jobs are uncertain. Who shall dare  
Say I'll not twang that harp ere long?

If it should chance that I am "fired"—  
Which is not an unlikely thing—  
I would at once trill an inspired  
Song such as only true bards sing.

I know full well the world at large  
Waits for this song; but song ne'er won  
A bard a living; don't discharge  
Me yet—not yet; I need the mon.

---

### JUST DESERTS.

I sometimes think (perhaps I'm wrong)  
That I'd be wealthy if I were  
Paid by the world for every song  
And every poem I write her.

And yet, and yet (ah! who can tell?)  
Had I for all my songs and rhyme  
My just deserts, I in a cell  
Might now, yes, now be "doing time".

If we had all we needed we'd be quite  
Well off perhaps, and doubtless know few cares.  
Had we, though, all we *wanted*, then we might  
Have worries, but we'd all be millionaires!

A moral here may be deduced, 'tis this :  
That wealth—great wealth does not free one from care.  
I would, however, in my quest for bliss  
Not hesitate to be a millionaire.

---

### POESY'S ESSENTIALS.

One who has never tried to rhyme may think  
The task is hard ; but no, it's easy when  
There is within one's reach a well of ink,  
A goodly lot of foolscap and a pen.

Of course one must have thoughts at one's command ;  
Thoughts, though, are very plentiful 'mong men.  
But O ! there is not always right at hand  
Those three essentials—paper, ink and pen.

---

### THE PEN.

The pen is man's best friend in times like these :  
More mighty than the sword, we're told ; let then  
The fighting men wield all the swords they please ;  
I'd rather (it is safer) wield a pen.

But yet not always, I'm constrained to state,  
Is the pen mightier and safer than  
The sword ; 'tis when the writing-man is " great "  
The pen wins out—Ah ! am I such a man ?

Just a few lines, say only four,  
 Allow me in which to explain  
 How I met and came to adore  
 Miss—no, too short is a quatrain.

---

MISS \* \* \* \* \*

'Twould take ten thousand tomes to try  
 To thoroughly tell the true tale  
 That tends to trace the tender tie  
 Uniting me to this female.

Yes, she—this female—is so nice  
 That not less than the number of  
 Tomes I have mentioned will suffice  
 To tell the story of our love.

I'll not essay the task ; no, I  
 Shall make most copious notes instead ;  
 The tale can then be told by my  
 Biographers—when I am dead.

---

DEFERRED LAURELS.

Some future antiquarian,  
 Delving between the light lines of  
 This volume, may feel that the man  
 Who wrote the lines knew how to love.

Perhaps the thought disclosed here may  
 Smack of conceit, and some may twit  
 Me thereupon. Ah well, if they  
 Do so I'll surely not mind it.

Posterity (jeer all ye please)  
 May do me justice. 'Tis, I find,  
 A joy to think I'll gain by these  
 Rhymes (sometime) a friend who'll prove kind.

Something funny is in order,  
So I'll tell about a boarder—  
Harrie Hady—who disliked to pay board bills, and who, they say,  
Hated working. Mr. Hady  
Married, therefore, his landlady.  
Harrie doesn't work now; he lives well, with no board bills to pay.

Will this story cause much laughter?  
No, I rather think that after  
It is read the more judicious will not even care to smile.  
There are in the world, dear ladies,  
Far too many Harrie Hadys—  
Shameless parasites whose slothful souls reek with the foulest guile.

---

## HILARIOUS HAPPENINGS.

He slipped on a banana peel  
And fell down hard, while one and all  
About him laughed; it seems a real  
Good joke to see a person fall.

And the effects of that fall he—  
The victim—felt for years; but then  
Most of us laugh quite heartily  
When mishaps come—to other men.

---

## HAZARDOUS HEIGHTS.

Though there's room, as I'm told, at the top,  
Yet my efforts to get there I'll stop;  
I might fall! While I'm no  
Strict abstainer, why go  
Where I'm likely to take *such* a drop?

In order these days to attract  
 Attention and to make a hit,  
 One must be funny ; yes, in fact,  
 One must be something of a wit.

One has to memorize a few  
 Old vaudevillian jokes, and drag  
 Them into all discussions to  
 Sustain his standing as a wag.

Now this is rather rough on one  
 Of serious proclivities.  
 'Tis hard on such to hand out fun  
 When discussing life's tragedies.

But humorists must live up to  
 Their reputations ; they must keep  
 The world a-laughing ; though they do  
 No doubt oft make high heaven weep.

---

#### THE REALITY OF THE UNREAL.

My book I'm drawing to a close,  
 I have now only one or two  
 More things to write ; I don't suppose  
 That any one will read them through.

The poem *Gwendolen McKnett*  
 Is much too long ; I hardly can  
 Expect *that* to be read ; nor yet  
 Will many read *A Model Man*.

Why, then, have labored over them,  
 Some matter of fact folks may ask.  
 'Twas simply because I—a-hem !  
 Well, just because I liked the task.

“The labor,” says the great bard, “we  
 Delight in, physics pain.” Ah, yes!  
 The pain that seemed to trouble me  
 Was just the pain of—loneliness!

Just loneliness. How funny! Yes,  
 I have felt lonely oftentimes;  
 And in my spells of loneliness  
 I found some comfort writing rhymes.

I found that thoughts were company—  
 That mythic creatures of my pen  
 Were kinder and more true to me  
 Than were real women and real men.

Therefore I revelled, as it were,  
 In Fancy’s world, so wondrous fair,  
 And won the love—the love of her  
 Whose presence sheds such glory there.

What tenderer companionship  
 Than hers, pray, can there be for me?  
 In lonely hours I must dip  
 (Can I do else?) in poesy.

---

PROLOGUE.

And now for *Gwen McKnett*.  
 She is a myth, but yet  
 The void in my heart would be greater were  
 It not for Gwen. To me  
 There’s a reality  
 About that world whose joys I share with her.  
 Faith’s eye beholds more than  
 One’s optic organ can.  
 The soul discerns more clearly than the mind.  
 And so I’ve learned how rare  
 And real that world is where  
 Dwell men and women who are true and kind.



I now intend to write  
That which will much delight  
Your very youthful heart, my Gwennie dear.  
O! I a poet am,  
And I don't care a—a bit  
Who knows it, for I'm not the sort to fear.

Some, who have read thus far,  
May not think these lines are  
As refined as could be penned by a bard who  
Was reared with so much care  
As I; but don't despair;  
There will be some genteel things said ere I'm through.

Really, Gwendolen McKnett,  
I have hardly started yet;  
I'm but sparring for an opening. Why, I  
Can, in ring parlance, land  
A punch with either hand.  
I'll be dealing out some real dope by and bye.

If in the index I  
Thunder thus loudly, my  
Motive is worthy. I should not commence  
This task too hurriedly;  
It is serious to me,  
For the poem is didactic—in a sense.

I wish to feel the ground,  
So to speak, ere I expound  
The striking truths and morals that I would  
In proper rhyme convey.  
Give me, then, some leeway.  
Before long I'll be doing you some good.



It is not right to hurl  
Upon a gentle girl  
Of your frail build great truths too suddenly.  
Besides, it's been some time  
Since I last dipped in rhyme;  
So I must now extremely careful be.

My last piece, as you know,  
Went the rounds some time ago  
Of the general press and of the magazines.  
My neglected art again  
I take up. I find it, Gwen,  
Hard at first to tell my thoughts by rhythmic means.

It is only at the start  
I am somewhat faint of heart;  
My art saves me from disaster, also my  
Nerve helps me when astride  
Of Pegasus. Few can ride  
That steed with such full confidence as I.

Should I now be dismayed?  
Nay, the task I have essayed  
Is indeed herculean, yet heretofore  
My nerves have stood the strain  
Involved in this work of the brain,  
And I rather think they can do so once more.

At the threshold, as it were,  
Of a work that might confer  
So much of happiness on humankind,  
I am not the one to let  
Any doubts and fears upset  
The equipoise of my gigantic mind.

While the verses I submit  
May fairly scintillate with wit,  
Yet I shall touch on serious subjects too :  
I propose to inculcate  
Lessons that may prove of great  
Advantage to a worthy girl like you.

Perhaps I'll disregard,  
Like Camden's good Gray Bard,  
Some verse requirements, but at the height  
Of any passion too  
O'erwhelming to subdue,  
I care not if prosodian feet I slight.

I'm a guy that knows what's what ;  
Flies, for instance, never got  
On my person, for I've cut my wisdom tooth.  
I'm no chump, and I would smash  
In the face of any rash  
Individual who doubts I speak the truth.

But I'm by nature meek ;  
When smitten on one cheek  
I turn the other one, I proudly state,  
Around for one more blow :  
But when struck thrice I show  
An inclination to expostulate.

Yes, as a rule, I'm mild ;  
I'm a sort of nature's child,  
Among her solitudes I love to be :  
'Mid her peaceful scenes I feel  
A happiness so real  
That my inmost soul thrills with an ecstasy.

Yes, in her solitudes  
I love to stray: her moods  
Are many and capricious; often she  
Is gentle, kind and mild,  
And loving as a child.  
But O how cruel she at times can be!

In her wild moments I,  
Beneath a lurid sky,  
Have stood and watched, with mingled joy and fear,  
The fierce outbreaking of  
A mighty wrath, when Love  
Seemed dead and Hate reigned on our trembling sphere.

Believe me, I am not  
A misanthropic lot:  
I love humanity—its joys are mine:  
Its sorrows, too, I share,  
And at times, though 'tis rare,  
I towards its dissipations do incline.

To tell you about these  
Dissipations, Gwen, may please  
And interest you: possibly they might,  
Should I suppress a few,  
(Which I had better do)  
Edify as much as they afford delight.

Well, once, O! Gwen McKnett,  
I smoked a cigarette;  
I'm a devil of a fellow, 'pon my word.  
And one night I went to  
The famous old Bellevue,  
And ordered there a bottle and a bird!

I may say every cent  
Of my week's stipend went  
For that light luncheon: and I had to do  
Thereafter, for a spell,  
My "eating" at a place less swell,  
But I picked my teeth in front of The Bellevue.

A business man, I hold,  
Should be alert and bold.  
An air of opulence conduces to  
Success: hence frequently,  
After sampling a free  
Lunch, I've picked my teeth in front of The Bellevue.

Men do dissemble so.  
Viewed in the abstract, though,  
Humanity is grand. 'Tis true, these days  
We are liable to find  
Here and there among our kind  
Specimens we cannot very warmly praise.

How strange life is! Yes, Gwen,  
I've often thought so when  
Before Boldt's door my useful "pick" I twirled.  
A student of life may  
In front of a café  
Acquire quite a knowledge of the world.

Not among nature's hills,  
Nor by the sea that thrills  
One with its grandeur and sublimity,  
Do I find life so dear  
As in the city here,  
Where I can study best its mystery.

The crowded streets appeal  
To me: on them I feel  
At home. 'Tis true God made the country, still  
By His grace and His aid  
The cities have been made.  
Why, then, of them should any one speak ill?

Great cities are—but you  
Will not this thing read through  
If I thus moralize. Now where was I  
Ere I diverged? O yes!  
I started to confess  
Some unforgotten sins of days gone by.

I, as I said, have smoked.  
I've actually invoked  
The Muse whilst puffing at a vile segar.  
I've drunk too—the weed's chief  
Concomitant, in brief,  
Is whiskey, which I've gulped at many a bar.

The users of the weed,  
(Smokers, chewers, snuffers), need  
A neutralizing article like gin  
To offset the nicotine  
In the brain, lungs, heart and spleen.  
Ah! whiskey and tobacco are akin.

To see such an unclean  
Thing as a pipe between  
The lips of men professing here on earth  
To aid God's cause is—well,  
Enough to make all hell  
Break out in unextinguishable mirth.

It really seems to me  
A strange anomaly  
For churchly men to smoke, as many do.  
Still if they're like the rest  
Of us, need we protest?  
No, let them drink and smoke and snuff and chew.

But it is so absurd,  
For those who preach The Word,  
To rail 'gainst drink when in that twin vice they  
Are steeped. Consistency  
Is, most assuredly,  
The rarest jewel in the world today.

But I digress again.  
I really must try, Gwen,  
To curb a habit which I much deplore.  
Now to resume my tale;  
'Tis one that cannot fail  
To edify you, as I've said before.

I have been to moral shows,  
I have wept at human woes,  
I have dabbled some in literature and art;  
I have even tasted of  
Those sweet delights that love  
Awakens in a young man's tender heart.

Where proudest Beauty reigned  
I have dwelt, but I refrained  
From yielding up that heart which in me beats:  
I have passed unscathed her snares  
Set to catch one unawares,  
Though I plucked most freely of her sweetest sweets.

Yes, these lips have clung ere this  
In a long impassioned kiss  
To other lips most roguish and most red ;  
And these eyes have gazed into  
Other eyes of deeper blue,  
And this breast hath pillowed many a fair young head.

And these arms, O yes! these arms  
Have encircled forms whose charms  
Far surpassed those told in fiction we have read ;  
But this heart was never theirs,  
For in all my love affairs  
I have ne'er permitted it to rule my head.

I have always had my way  
With the fairer sex. Ah! they  
Deem me more charming than most of my kind ;  
And probably they're right,  
The dear creatures are so bright,  
And to manly beauty none of them are blind.

O the hearts with which I've toyed !  
O the conquests I've enjoyed !  
O the victims of my charms who pined and died !  
Yet not undeserved their fate,  
For they planned to subjugate  
One who beat them at the little game they tried.

But I'll drop this talk on hearts  
With its sweets, its wiles and arts ;  
For, although I am an adept at the game,  
There's a young blonde fairy who  
Might my now free soul subdue—  
Though I'll not divulge the said young fairy's name.



I am ruthless I confess,  
Yet my heart is really less  
Adamantine than my writings may reveal.  
Ah! there's one—this fairy sprite—  
Who with little effort might  
Crush that organ 'neath her dainty little heel.

Well, if she felt thus inclined,  
I would not so greatly mind:  
I'd lay bare my throbbing heart without a groan.  
Though it might be thought unwise  
For a maid to utilize  
A man's fond heart as a mere stepping-stone.

Would the weight, though, of those feet  
Still the heart that now doth beat?  
The pressure *might* be fatal, yet who cares?  
'Neath *her* feet to yield one's breath!  
Ah! this surely were a death  
That would sweetly realize my fondest prayers.

Then my epitaph would show  
Those most curious to know  
Of him who underneath the stone doth rest,  
That the sleeper was a youth  
(Epitaphs all tell the truth)  
Who died of an oppression on the chest.

Now fair Gwen knows well for whom  
I would meet this crushing doom,  
So 'twere supererogatory to explain:  
And I therefore will proceed  
To other things my pet may read  
With no less a sense of pleasure and of gain.

Shall I let my radiant gem  
Know how greatly I condemn  
An appetite for alcoholic drink?  
Why some real dear friends of mine  
Are accustomed to take wine!  
But of course from such depravity I shrink.

Yes, I'm temperate: and so  
I believe that rum should go—  
That one ought to put it down whene'er one can:  
And on occasions I,  
Especially when dry,  
Have put it down—for I'm a temperance man.

I have played the races, though  
The nags backed by me were slow;  
At the tracks I never have met with success.  
I'm a very easy mark  
For the touter and the shark.  
My faith in them I really must suppress.

I've played poker, let me say,  
In a very cautious way.  
Mayhap I've sworn and used some slang at times.  
I've been out nights with the boys,  
And have known certain joys  
Which 'twere better not to speak of in these rhymes.

Jovial spirits like a lark:  
Often I (but keep this dark,  
For I breathe it in a confidential way)  
Paint the town a crimson hue,  
Yet 'tis singular how blue  
One feels on his release the following day.

But my loveliest of pets  
Knows how soon a cocktail sets  
One aright. O! as a bracer it's immense.  
And it's often I have quaffed  
Of this necessary draught,  
Which indicates that I'm a man of sense.

When I obtain a pass  
To an opera that's first-class,  
I invariably do patronize the show;  
And when the ballet's called  
I, although by no means bald,  
Am always to be found on the front row.

'Round stage-doors I have hung  
Many times to watch the young  
And modest members of the ballet corps  
Emerge. I—no. Who cares  
To hear about affairs  
With new-found friends after the play is o'er?

After the play! Ah! then  
Life's gayest hours, Gwen,  
Begin. I join the strollers, beaus and belles;  
I manage to pick up  
A fair friend, with whom I sup  
In some snug room at one of the hotels.

I am drowsy through the day,  
But on the Great White Way,  
During the night and through the very small  
Hours before a brand  
New day dawns on the land,  
I'm the liveliest and gayest of them all.

Blithely I move among  
The pleasure-loving throng  
In gilded salons when the lights are bright.  
Ah, no habitué  
Of our town's White Way  
Is as care-free as I am, Gwen, at night.

The pop of champagne corks,  
The sound of knives and forks,  
Song, laughter, music—I delight to hear  
All this; and then the flow  
Of wit, and, later, —no,  
Why tell of joys snatched just as day draws near?

Bohemia with its  
Kindly and clever wits,  
Its open-hearted, generous-minded men  
And women, whose free souls  
No earthly law controls.  
In such a world I mingle—now and then.

O! I am a dandy lad.  
I'm the sonny of my dad,  
And the idol, don't forget, of Logan Square.  
Say, I'll knock the stuffin' out  
Of the duffer who would doubt  
That my head has a sufficiency of hair.

I have done some things, of course,  
That have caused me slight remorse;  
I am ever ready to admit the truth.  
I've ne'er gone the pace that kills,  
Though I've sown on barren hills  
Some wild oats in adolescent days of youth.

There are those who glibly speak  
On religion, yet who seek  
Places where I'd blush suffusely were I seen.  
Why, when I my acts compare  
With most others, I declare  
My record looks particularly clean.

Ne'er yet, when in a feud,  
Have I my hands imbued  
In blood; I ne'er burnt barns, ne'er forged a will,  
Nor napped a kiddie, nor  
Burglarized a house or store,  
Nor picked a pocket, nor e'en tapped a till.

I ne'er held trains up, nor  
Embezzled funds, therefore  
Through life I've exercised much self-restraint.  
Yes, negatively, I  
Have acted well, and my  
Conduct, consequently, cannot cause complaint.

On the whole, I've been so good  
That if Angel Gabriel should  
Sound his trumpet now 'twould cause me no dismay,  
But with my usual grace,  
And a smile upon my face,  
I would join the ransomed ones without delay.

For I am, I state with pride,  
Which I take no pains to hide,  
A High Ritualistic Churchman; hence I need  
But say that when life's o'er  
I shall gain the heavenly shore  
Where joys await those who believe in the right creed.

To be saved one must believe  
What theologians conceive  
As proper and correct. Right living may  
For our bodies do, but O!  
"Right" believing will, we know,  
"Save the soul", as I once heard a bishop say.

By that the eminent  
And philosophic churchman meant  
That you must accept his views or else be—well,  
To avert the doom that he  
Foresaw we should agree  
With his hypothesis anent the place called hell.

But I myself, fair Gwen,  
Have often thought that men  
Need not to such ideas pay any heed.  
Worship one God—just one;  
Let each daughter and each son  
Of that God be good. Of dogma there's no need.

A multiplicity  
Of Gods—e'en two or three  
Supreme Creators tend to complicate  
And becloud the matter; though  
My knowledge, you should know,  
Of theologic doctrines is not great.

Ecclesiastic views of mine  
May be wrong. I'm no divine.  
I don't wish to seem assertive. I know well  
Some phlegmatic natures need  
A club to stir them: hence a creed  
Is best for them—a creed that hints of hell.



Hell where lost souls are to  
Perpetually stew  
In seething mixtures of brimstone and oil.  
The saints on high (mark this)  
Derive their greatest bliss  
In looking down and watching sinners boil.

Thus many, alas! view those  
Future joys and future woes  
The saints and sinners are to know. I paint  
A picture orthodoxy must  
Accept. But O! if true, I trust  
That I, Gwen dear, shall never be a saint.

Hell! No, I'll not discuss  
The subject. Whyfore fuss  
O'er this archaic horror? The disgrace  
Of such a teaching! It  
Is an insult to the wit  
And common sense of our aspiring race.

O! think what hell implies!  
It is the worst of lies:  
One that has driven many a wretch insane.  
Eternal woe? Absurd!  
Where—where in all God's Word  
Can one an idea so revolting gain?

“No rose without a thorn” applies  
To our earth life. Beyond the skies  
There's pleasure unaccompanied, Gwen, by pain.  
Heaven with hell may here below  
Be found annexed: o'er yonder, though,  
A heaven without a hell we may attain.



In paradise there'd be  
No happiness for me  
Knowing that somewhere in celestial space  
There were an awful hell.  
Verily I would rebel  
Against the monstrous author of the place.

But one need have no fear  
That after this life here  
There'll be for some a hell prepared. Nay, nay.  
There'll be a heaven, though:  
And I'm happy, for I know  
Should it be denied me, I shall rest for aye.

Rest! Ah, Gwen, let me pause  
Here a moment. Why? Because  
That word is so delicious. O! I love  
To dwell upon that word.  
Rest, rest—yes, undisturbed  
By hell's harsh shrieks or softer sound-waves from above.

Heaven, I feel, can get  
Along, sweet Gwen McKnett,  
Without my company; and as for hell—  
Well, possibly hell too  
May manage, Gwen, to do  
Without my presence. Who, ah, who can tell?

The probabilities  
Are that my absence from these  
Two places will prove no calamity  
To either; e'en the earth,  
Whereon I had my birth,  
Never seemed to care especially for me.

A stranger reading my  
Verses might think that I  
Am popular, but I am not. I've penned  
A few lines that may be  
Admired, but for me  
The world cares not. Gwen, you're my only friend.

My one friend! What need then  
To crave the love of men?  
To wish for other friendships? Yes, why sigh  
For popularity?  
'Twould not, if gained, make me  
Any happier. Why want it then—ah! why?

Your friendship is indeed  
Sufficient, and I need  
None of the world's. I wonder, though, sometimes  
Why it is I am not more  
Popular in this world, for  
I'm not so bad, e'en if I do write rhymes.

Through my being there doth run  
A religious vein; no one  
Can fail to mark so palpable a fact.  
You may note it in my air,  
In the very clothes I wear,  
'Tis apparent in my every word and act.

A phrenological survey  
Of my cranium this day  
Showed my bump of veneration to be great;  
While my chiropodist, who knows  
The hidden language of the toes,  
Also found strong indications of this trait.

They who know me best have said  
That from the apex of my head  
To the soles of my aristocratic feet  
I appear to be possessed  
Of human nature's very best  
Attributes, and this explains why I'm so sweet.

My ideals are sublime;  
I would, had I the time,  
Recount them here. How many a poor soul needs  
Encouragement; and it  
Would likely benefit  
Posterity to read about my deeds.

But time forbids, and they  
Who'll walk life's devious way  
When I rest from its labors and its strife,  
Must without help from me  
Work out their destiny.  
I can't tell now the story of my life.

A notable career  
May be in this life here  
(As I en passant might succinctly state)  
Obtained by industry.  
Perseverance has made me  
A poet. One must work to become great.

Success is gained by toil.  
Gallons of midnight oil  
['Twas gas I used, but oil in verse sounds best]  
Have I consumed o'er my  
Laborsome jobs, but I  
Love work; sometimes I'd rather work than rest.

Ah! Gwendolen McKnett,  
'Tis only by the sweat  
(Should I say "perspiration?") of one's brow  
That one achieves success  
And wealth and happiness,  
All of which are—almost—in my grasp now.

Almost, not quite, dear love.  
'Tis but a question of  
Time, merely time—or else eternity!  
But as time is so short,  
So fleeting, Gwen, I ought  
Soon be in the possession of the three.

The prospect, though, of this  
Eternity of bliss,  
Which is so imminent, should cause no one  
To give up striving here  
For joys that are held dear.  
I shall struggle on as I have always done.

My modesty, indeed,  
Is my chief fault; I need  
Assurance, more—er—well, I might say "cheek"  
To successfully pursue  
Dame Fortune, and to woo  
From her the golden shekels, so to speak.

A man—yes, even a  
Woman, dear Gwennie, may  
Be happy, quite so, without riches. Wealth  
Does not necessarily  
Mean happiness; give me  
A competence, and love, and peace, and health.

Love! peace! health! contentment!  
If these to me are sent,  
With a competence—a neat one—thrown in,  
I could get along real well.  
Still it's very hard to tell;  
Mankind seems ever hankering for more tin.

I am no exception, Gwen,  
To the general run of men.  
That rapacious soul of mine, which fumes and frets  
In its imprisonment,  
May never be content  
Until it slumbers 'neath the violets.

In time I might control  
My too aspiring soul.  
One learns some things in life! it's a good school.  
So, ere the violets shed  
Their fragrance o'er my bed  
In earth's damp soil, my spirit I may rule.

These various things I say  
Not in a boastful way,  
For boasting is a thing that I abhor;  
But my candor is so great  
It compels me to relate  
My virtues to the maiden I adore.

Not that you—that maiden—are  
Unaware how very far  
Superior I am to most mankind,  
But one's merits should not be,  
From mistaken modesty,  
Hidden where they would be difficult to find.

They baptized me by a name  
Which was not so bad—the same  
Being *Clifford*. Well, it might have been much worse.  
They could have dubbed me “Walter”  
At the font there by the altar,  
As I lay helpless in the embrace of my nurse.

Yes, “Clifford” they called me;  
The fore part seems to be  
All right; it sounds well; there my sponsors soared  
To heights supreme. Ah! if  
They had but stopped at Cliff.  
There’s a shallowness, alas! about a *ford*.

The christening, dear Gwen,  
Being over, I was then  
Driven home and carried, howling, to my cradle,  
While my relatives below  
Sat down with much gusto  
To the choicest viands ever set on table.

A grace was duly said  
For the very generous spread;  
The grace was short, and yet, before ’twas through,  
The grub ’gan to disappear,  
For the *Fillupsers*, my dear,  
Are no slouchers when it comes to a menu.

They ate while I did sleep,  
And they drank, too, long and deep:  
’Twas “a feast of reason and a flow of soul”.  
Ah! the ruddy wine went ’round,  
And my health, as since I found,  
Was drunk full oft from many a sparkling bowl.

Some kindly guests were so  
Desirous to show  
By frequent toasts their liking for the kid,  
That ere the banquet's close  
They sank in sweet repose  
By the festive-board, 'neath which they soon were hid.

The affair passed off real well ;  
The police were called to quell  
But few disturbances. There will, my pet,  
At family gatherings be  
More or less hostility,  
Which manifests itself in ways that I regret.

Every household in the land,  
I am led to understand,  
Contains a skeleton kept out of sight ;  
But the presence of so grim  
A guest can never dim  
The sunshine of our homes love makes so bright.

I was reared in luxury's lap,  
Noted chefs prepared my pap,  
And French nurse-girls tossed me on Parisian knees :  
Now I find in man's estate  
My taste for nurse-maids is as great,  
Whether they be English, French or Portuguese.

It matters not to me  
Woman's nationality ;  
They all have charms, and I can well enthuse  
Over any, even those  
Who less lovely traits disclose  
Serve quite well to interest me and amuse.



As a study I commend  
To any philosophic friend  
That of female foibles; the subject can  
Open to one's mental view  
A world where lurketh not a few  
Of those mysteries as yet unsolved by man.

I have delved most deeply in  
This rich mine, and I have been  
Fortunate in those discoveries there made;  
The traits revealed, some most unique,  
Of which I care not now to speak,  
Have for all my work of research amply paid.

"The proper study of mankind  
Is man." In Pope this line you'll find.  
Pope's head was level, and his thoughts sublime.  
Like me, he understood  
Man's capacity for good,  
As also man's capacity for crime.

He read men's minds, he knew  
Their natures, and saw through  
Those subterfuges practiced to deceive:  
His glance, so keenly bent,  
Beneath the surface went:  
Though the malice of his shafts oft made one grieve.

We poets, Gwen—we who  
Analyze the false and true,  
Have fuller knowledge of life's subtler side  
Than the average man, whose views,  
Unilluminated by the Muse,  
Must perforce be less extended and less wide.

Our souls are unconfined.  
Chains, Gwendolen, may bind  
Our bodies to this transient mundane place,  
But O! our minds are free,  
And in the spirit we  
Traverse ofttimes the vasty halls of space.

On fleecy clouds we float  
To happy spheres remote:  
We hear the echo of that olden song  
Which greeted our earth  
The morning of her birth  
When she commenced her flight the stars among.

Love's strong and loyal arm  
Guards us from every harm,  
And Peace in all its plenitude is ours;  
While, free as birds at play,  
We pass full many a day  
With Flora in the midst of her gay bowers.

We love the flowers, they  
Delight us on our way.  
Sweet blooms of garden, field, hillslope and wood,  
The clambering vines, the trees,  
The waving grasses—these  
All show how fair life is—how fair and good.

A wild rose blossoming  
In the first days of spring  
So fresh, so pure, so beautiful, brings cheer  
To us; while in the haze  
Of late autumnal days  
The radiant golden-rod is no less dear.

The carol of the birds—  
That music without words—  
Strikes in our thankful hearts an answering chord;  
And we rove through fairest scenes,  
While no shadow intervenes  
To cloud the joys those blessings do afford.

So near to Nature's heart,  
Yet not despising art  
In its true sphere, we wend our way along  
Life's sunniest paths. And O  
The blessings that we know!  
Who would not be, like us, a Son of Song?

Sometimes on idle days  
Through forest depths we blaze  
Our way, to keep tryst with a woodnymph fair.  
This surely is no sin.  
No. "There's a pleasure in  
The pathless woods," as Byron doth declare.

Coy sylphs of fair wood lands  
Wave their white lily hands  
And beckon us to their free rendezvous.  
To slight these denizens  
Of dewy dales and glens  
A true, chilvarous poet would not do.

So we enjoy ourselves  
Disporting with the elves  
In mystic forests: yes, we mingle 'mong  
The driads, fauns and fays,  
While Pan pipes his sweet lays  
And the glad woods re-echo with Love's song.

O! we do lead a life  
Apart from all the strife  
Of that rude world without: yet, dearest Gwen,  
We like that rude world's fun,  
And I—yes, I for one  
Rather like its women, too, as well as men.

It is not wrong, nor yet  
Is it strange, sweet Gwen McKnett,  
That I should entertain a liking for  
A sex of which my Gwen  
Is a shining specimen,  
And one in which I fail to find a flaw.

The cold, impassive man  
Who on earth's fair daughters can  
Gaze unmoved, commits the wrong: ah no, not he  
Who confesses frankly to  
The spell that maids like you  
Cast o'er tenderer hearts of masculinity.

Wine, woman, song—these three,  
But the greatest one to me  
Is woman. I've extolled with tongue and pen  
Her charms; but of them all,  
Blonde or brunette, short or tall,  
There's none that can compare with peerless Gwen.

Yes, of the world's Big Three—  
The world's blest trinity  
Woman is first. Her rule is absolute  
Here in this world so wide.  
She is creation's pride—  
Creation of which she's the perfect fruit.

How often have you, Gwen,  
Played with the hearts of men.  
Men must, perforce, yield to such charms as yours.  
Your beauty casts a spell  
On men, as you know well.  
Ah! men are weak, and beauty so allures!

If men go wrong, if they  
Do ever chance to stray  
From paths of rectitude, and err sometimes,  
Judge them not harshly, for  
The women they adore  
Are oft the instigators of their crimes.

Though Adam sinned, would he  
Of that forbidden tree  
Have ta'en the fruit Eve filched had it not been  
For her cajoleries?  
Knowing the cause of these  
Moral lapses, one thinks lightly of man's sin.

Yet there are times when I  
Can scarce restrain a sigh.  
O! the wickedness so rampant nowadays  
Almost causes one to weep.  
Really I can hardly keep  
An undimmed eye while contemplating sin's dark ways.

I've sufficient chivalry  
To forgive a man when he  
Sins for a woman's special profit. What  
If in a house he breaks,  
Loots a bank, or even takes  
Human life? For woman's sake I blame him not.

Women are or ought to be  
Exempt from any penalty  
Attached to law's infringement. I contend  
That lovely woman can't do wrong.  
We've thwarted her sweet will too long:  
Let us for her the cruel laws amend.

A woman oft is stoned  
For a crime that is condoned  
In a man. To me this doesn't seem quite straight.  
Either let the woman free  
Or stone both. Which shall it be?  
The matter's rather hard to regulate.

Man has no right, we're told,  
From the fair ones to withhold  
The world's advantages, so-called. Let them—  
Women—be exempted too,  
That is in a worldly view,  
From the penalty of that sin we condemn.

Yet nothing can prevent  
The resultant punishment  
Of any crime. A man who may defame  
His manhood suffers in  
His conscience for the sin,  
Although the world absolves him from all blame.

There's no man 'neath the sun  
So wretched as the one  
Who has a guilty conscience: although wealth  
And, consequently, troops  
Of friends are his, what boots  
It all if he has lost his mind's sweet health?

The mind's tranquillity  
Gone—gone forever, he  
Who has offended against God and man  
Is to be envied not.  
There's nothing can out-blot  
A wrong once done: not e'en forgiveness can.

Thus sin the conscience sears  
In spite of what one hears  
Of man's immunity. A wrong, in fact,  
Can never be repaired.  
A man is never spared  
The haunting memory of a sinful act.

Woman fares better here  
Than man, for it is clear  
Her conscience is a stouter one; she can  
With more ease bear the weight  
Of sin however great.  
Yes, here a woman's stronger than a man.

Remembered acts that might  
Have been—well, not just right  
[I won't say sinful—women cannot sin]  
Don't seem to worry her:  
She's not hampered, I infer,  
By conscience, as so many men have been.

Ne'ertheless a woman may  
Be too restricted in our day.  
Abrogate for her the social laws; aye, give  
Her equal rights—e'en more  
Than man is blessed with; for  
Extra license is her just prerogative.



Let her do as she lists.  
A jury that resists  
Her right is wanting in true gallantry.  
Give woman every time  
Carte-blanche to plunge in crime.  
She should, I think, be absolutely free.

She—the world's pride and hope—  
Should be given larger scope,  
A broader field, a sphere that has no bound,  
In order that she might  
Wage a more equal fight  
With tyrant man upon life's battleground.

Though hampered and confined  
By man's laws, womankind  
Yet manages in tragic days like these  
To hold her head above  
The swirling waters of  
Life's all too frequently tumultuous seas.

Woman reasons little, yet  
She gets there, Gwen McKnett:  
Gets there by impulse, intuition—or  
Call it just what you may,  
She by the quickest way  
Attains with ease that which man strives so for.

Through all the years of time  
Mankind has found its prime  
Source of comfort and of joy in woman—whose  
Gentle graces, tears and smiles,  
Mingling with her arts and wiles,  
Have inspired oft the votaries of the Muse.

Milton [and I agree  
With him] hath said that she—  
Speaking of woman—is God's last and best  
Gift unto favored man.  
Though strongly put, who can  
Controvert that which the poet has expressed?

The blind but observant bard  
Has, you see, a high regard  
For woman. Well, most poets have. You'll find  
That I (as might sometimes  
Be gathered from my rhymes)  
Also have a deep esteem for womankind.

At her shrine I've bowed down,  
I've trembled at her frown,  
Her blame has turned my thoughts to death, but when  
She has praised me and smiled,  
O! my heart has with wild,  
Delirious rapture leaped within me then.

For her—ah yes, for her  
I would, though no mariner,  
Navigate a barque upon the raging main:  
Or, if she preferred it, I,  
Though no aeronaut, would try  
Through the atmosphere to speed an aeroplane.

For her the midnight oil  
I've burnt: for her no toil  
Has been too great for me to undertake.  
Sometimes I think that I  
Would not hesitate to die—  
Were it really necessary—for her sake.

Woman! Ah, 'tis not mine  
Upon her brow to twine  
The laurel and the bay belonging there;  
Let me in silence grieve,  
While happier poets weave  
The immortelles on brows that are so fair.

When but a lad, ere yet  
My lip was downy, pet,  
Woman's influence o'er my young life was great:  
She was my star whose light  
Ever guided me aright;  
And now, in you, she overrules my fate.

Before your bright eyes beamed  
Upon me, Gwen, life seemed  
A useless thing; with my own hand, who knows,  
I might, had we ne'er met,  
O Gwendolen McKnett,  
Have brought my life to an untimely close.

True, I had tasted of  
The world's poor joys, but love  
Had not as yet my life illumed; but when  
You burst upon my view  
Life had in store, I knew,  
The rarest happiness for me, dear Gwen.

And when you smiled and spoke  
My soul, long dormant, woke.  
Then the full beauty, aye! and glory of  
The world impressed me, Gwen,  
As ne'er before. I then  
First realized the power of true love.

O mistress of my soul!  
Fair enchantress, your control  
Over my destiny was prophesied  
Far back in halcyon days,  
E'er falsehood's blighting maze  
Obscured those joys Love scattered far and wide.

In sturdy days, my Gwen,  
When men were brave, and when  
The maids were fair; aye, fair as your dear self—  
When love was never sold  
Nor bought with paltry gold,  
When worth and merit ranked above mere wealth.

In golden days—days of  
Peace, happiness and love:  
When the fair earth knew naught of war and strife:  
When good will and good cheer  
Prevailed among men here,  
And every blessing gladdened every life.

O my darling! O my more  
Than life itself! You I adore  
With all the passion of my frenzied soul.  
Yes, love, for you I feel  
An idolater's fierce zeal  
That hades cannot curb nor yet control.

I've sung of freedom, yea,  
And boasted in my day  
Of its delights; but now how gladly I  
Would yield my liberty  
At Gwen's feet, so that she  
Might ever rule me to the day I die.

To be, ah yes! her thrall,  
Ever at her beck and call—  
Gods! at the thought the hot blood rushes through  
Each pulsatory vein.  
No office could I gain  
Whose duties would be pleasanter to do.

The tasks that Gwen McKnett  
Would condescend to set  
Her willing subject would be quickly done.  
Ah, let me ask who would  
Not think it very good  
To dance attendance on so fair a one?

Her slightest word to me  
Would be as a decree  
I needs must heed. O! I would be content  
Thus waiting upon her—  
A life-long servitor,  
In dread of naught excepting banishment.

Outside my prison room  
The flowers each year might bloom,  
And hills and vales be rich with summer's green,  
And Nature, mayhap, smile  
On her handiwork the while,  
And songbirds' melodies make glad the scene:

Atlanta's foamy shore  
Might with old ocean's roar  
Resound as in the days I trod thereon;  
While ships might sail afar  
Beyond the harbor bar  
To lands, it may be, 'neath a southern sun:

But held a captive by  
My peerless Gwennie, I  
The fair world would renounce with no regret;  
Its joys were far less real  
Than those that I would feel  
In the service of my dear exacting pet.

Ah! nevermore to stray  
From Gwennie's side away,  
But close as her dear shadow I would be,  
Attending unto all  
Her wants, both great and small,  
In a proper spirit of servility.

O! I would never leave  
Her day or—er—or eve.  
O! happy days and happy evenings of  
A vassalage like this,  
Of uninterrupted bliss,  
Of a life spent by the side of her I love,

Of a joy I may not name,  
Of a heart in which the flame  
Of wild and unquenched longings glow these days:  
Of a dream beyond all dreams,  
Whose sweet fulfillment seems  
So near while in her soulful orbs I gaze.

How beautiful and fair!  
How strongly sweet and rare  
Is a life like mine swayed by love's mystic spell!  
Love makes a paradise  
Of a world that otherwise  
Would be, perhaps, a veritable hell.

Do I speak in terms too strong?  
Nay, my darling, it were wrong  
To speak other than I do of that which calls  
For unadulterated truth,  
The which I've told from earliest youth,  
And ever will—no matter what befalls.

His Satanic Nobs, fair dame,  
I don't hesitate to shame:  
I tell the truth in poetry as in prose:  
Also, as is but right,  
In the sermons I indite,  
And in essays, tracts and all that I compose.

I have no doubt at times  
Uttered platitudes in rhymes;  
Some very inane lines I've doubtless penned;  
Dull and prosy, too, I've been,  
But I ne'er commit the sin  
Of exaggerating facts to gain an end.

Most men prevaricate  
When called on to relate  
Their fishing exploits, but not so with me:  
E'en here, my dear one, I  
Hesitate to tell a lie.  
I cite as proof of my veracity

The case of that large trout;  
Its weight, as I found out,  
Was ninety pounds—I caught it in the spring.  
Now I ne'er swore it weighed  
A hundred pounds, fair maid:  
Though others would have done this very thing.



Among my friends, fair Gwennie,  
There are doubtless very many  
(Your sweet self in their ranks may hold a place)  
Who think that I do go  
To an extreme in being so  
Observant of the truth in every case.

But I'm so free from guile;  
It's my nature, pet, and while  
Your Clifford breathes this mortal life below  
It will be his highest aim,  
Not to acquire fame,  
But to tell the truth in which he revels so.

There is so much being done  
In the way of lying on  
The slightest provocation: it might be  
Remarked here that the men  
In this respect are no worse, Gwen,  
Than the fairer portion of humanity.

Think not that I'm inclined  
To disparage womankind.  
I reverence the sex, and so you must  
Not judge my views severe.  
No indeed, my Gwennie dear,  
I may be plain of speech but I am just.

How often as one sips  
The honey from ripe lips  
Do doubts of their sincerity arise;  
The words that issue through,  
Though false, may yet seem true,  
Until too late the scales fall from our eyes.

Yes, too late to regain  
The peace whose happy reign  
Once blessed those hearts that now are cold. Yet who  
Need care, e'en though Love lies  
A-bleeding? Is it wise  
To grieve because a woman proves untrue?

But there are lips atween  
Whose beauteous curves, I ween,  
No utterances of falsehood e'er flow through.  
Those lips, as you divine,  
Are yours. I would that mine  
Could this night meet them in a kiss or two.

But now you are not here,  
So I'm compelled, my dear,  
To kiss the comely sirens who are nigh.  
Moore tells us that we may,  
When from loved lips away,  
Make love to those that happen to be by.

Tom Moore's advice is sound.  
Yes, one is really bound  
Who goes through life to cull the sweets thereof.  
Undoubtedly a man  
May to his Matilda Ann  
Be true though he in Sall sees traits to love.

Some may think otherwise,  
So I shan't dogmatize  
On a moot point; one's mind perhaps may change.  
But there's no need for us  
The matter to discuss,  
Because from you my fancy ne'er can range.

Now other girls I see—  
Girls who really dote on me,  
Girls of whose charms a poet well might sing;  
But somehow they don't fill  
All that's called for on the bill.  
None but my Gwen can do this wished-for thing.

O you surpass them all,  
Your charms they never pall;  
"Their infinite variety," to quote Shakespeare,  
"Age cannot wither nor  
Can custom stale." Therefore  
I'll prove ever loyal to my Gwennie dear.

Time—grim old Time might fly,  
Aye! eons cycle by,  
Worlds be disrupted, crumble and decay—  
All this and more might be,  
But O! the love in me  
For Gwen McKnett can never pass away.

It is founded on a rock,  
Or rather on a frock—  
On the blue silk garment that you sometimes wear;  
I think you had it on  
That night we sat upon  
The sofa, in the alcove, by the stair.

And yet I am not sure  
Even of this: 'twas your  
Eyes—your expressive eyes, that were so bright,  
Which held my heart in thrall.  
O! I was dead to all  
Other things when seated there with you—that night.

That night, Gwen, of the ball!  
O! I recall it all—  
The dance, the music and the merriment,  
The flowers and the feast,  
And last, but O! not least,  
The time we in the cozy corner spent.

We left the merry throng  
Awhile, nor thought it wrong  
In that sequestered spot to have a chat:  
'Twas there I told my love.  
Ah me, the sweet strains of  
A waltz came faintly to us where we sat.

Yes, Gwennie, it was there  
That I my heart laid bare—  
There in the alcove. Do you not recall  
My protestations of  
An all-absorbing love,  
As I knelt by you that night at the ball?

Surely you don't forget,  
O Gwendolen McKnett,  
My soul's outpouring. When a lover kneels  
To plead fittingly his cause,  
Can she whom he adores  
So soon forget his passionate appeals?

I live in memory  
That night again: I see  
Your face abeam with smiles. I hear again  
That waltz by Straus—*The Blue*  
*Danube*, and I with you  
Dance to its lively measure, dearest Gwen.

That waltz! O, Gwen McKnett,  
It haunts and thrills me yet:  
My dreams are gladdened by its cheerie flow  
Of melody. When near  
Life's end those strains I'll hear:  
They'll lull me to my endless sleep I know.

The frou-frou of your gown  
Seemed, as we danced adown  
The festooned hall, to blend with those notes of  
That waltz song. The delights  
Of that night of all nights  
Are my chief gems in memory's treasure-trove.

And when my time to die  
Arrives, 'twould satisfy  
My soul as from earth's clay it takes its flight  
Could it, my peerless Gwen,  
But hear the music then  
Of the swish of the ball-skirt you wore that night.

The "rustling of a wing"  
(Strange "Bob" thought so!) might bring  
A joy to some; but far more dear than all  
Other melodies unto  
My soul is the frou-frou  
Of that bifurcated skirt worn at a ball.

O Gwen, sweet Gwen, my pride,  
When you are by my side  
This world of ours seems almost divine:  
That heart of yours I feel  
Is true as tempered steel,  
As it beats in unison with that of mine.

Yes, Gwendolen, to me  
You somehow seem to be  
The one above all womankind in whom  
So nicely concentrate  
All those virtues men call great,  
And which tend to rid this earth of all its gloom.

When your fair face you turn  
Towards me, and I discern  
Thereon such kindliness unmarred by guile,  
I feel that I am blessed,  
That life hath for me a zest  
In the benediction born of your smile.

Your graciousness doth add  
So much to make life glad.  
Precious are those dear ties that bind me to  
The object of my love.  
Why the very saints above  
Envy me for being smiled upon by you.

The world most wisely finds  
In Shakespeare's Rosalinds,  
His sweet Violas and his Juliets,  
And other women, much  
To love; but they're not such  
True paragons as are the Gwen McKnetts.

"What's in a name?" Well, more  
Than Shakespeare ever saw  
Or yet "dreamt of in his philosophy".  
Had you lived in his time  
He would this truth sublime  
Have found and have acknowledged readily.



And so your name, Gwen dear,  
Would much have pleased Shakespeare:  
He would have placed you foremost among those  
Fair heroines who claim  
Man's homage, and your fame  
Would be borne afar on every breeze that blows.

Now I have looked around,  
But thus far have not found  
Another who would prove so sweet a pet.  
So cheer up, Gwen, don't fear,  
I'm too dead stuck, my dear,  
On those charms of yours to sour on them yet.

You're not the first girl, Gwen,  
That I have loved, but then  
You're the only one whom I can love for aye.  
What a favored girl you are!  
Verily a lucky star  
Must have shone upon you on your natal day.

You have my love. What more  
Gwen dear, can you ask for?  
I would shower wealth upon you if I could;  
But as I can't, I'll do  
The next best thing for you—  
I'll deluge you with rhymes. Am I not good?

The wealth, Gwen, of the heart  
Is best. If by my art  
I might convey to you that treasure which  
Is stored in mine, I feel  
I'd be doing you a real  
Generous act; for then (in rhymes) you would be rich.



Rich—yes, beyond dreams of  
Cold avarice. A love  
That fills a heart is worthy of regard.  
Why should a woman spurn  
Such a heart, and from it turn,  
E'en though it pulsates in an humble bard?

I'm not that fickle kind  
Who, when they chance to find  
Another charmer warranted to please,  
Uncompunctiously shake  
Their former flame. I make  
The substitution only by degrees.

I may be classed perhaps  
Among diplomatic chaps.  
I hate to wound one's feelings; so I do  
Not exactly drop the old  
Till I have a dead sure hold  
On the new. But this does not apply to you.

Where upon this mundane sphere  
Breathes another lass so dear,  
So precious, as fair Gwendolen McKnett?  
O! in you, dear love, I find  
The ideal that my mind  
Formed ere your charms my raptured gaze had met.

I, of danger unforewarned,  
Succumbed the moment when there dawned  
Upon me charms so ravishing. I then  
Experienced a sense  
Of ecstasy intense.  
I'll ne'er forget when first I met my Gwen.

Life's worth the living when  
We have with us our Gwen—  
Our own blithe lassie Gwennie. O her voice,  
Whether heard in song or speech,  
Has a power that might teach  
The coldest hearts to love and to rejoice.

Her voice so fresh, so young,  
So clear, so sweet. I've hung  
As in a spell upon its every word:  
Its dulcet accents, fraught  
With love's glad truths, have taught  
Me lessons I before had never heard.

Until my life's last hour  
Her voice shall have the power  
To spur me on to high and mighty deeds.  
I shall show, O! Gwen McKnett,  
The world what it has not learned yet—  
That Cliff's soul can soar above mere bulbs and seeds.

Her voice! Has not its tone  
Reached at times high Heaven's throne,  
And caused the saints around it a surprise?  
And a happiness far more  
Complete than they before  
Have known in their experience in the skies?

Speak then—speak now, fair sprite,  
That we who listen might  
Taste of Heaven's joy ere our life's lease is through.  
When death shall hush those notes,  
Why we can cut our throats  
And take the journey Heavenward with you.

Should your "flight" tend downward—no,  
'Tis not likely Jericho  
Will hereafter be your dwelling-place: and yet  
We could none of us forbear  
To follow you, if needs be, there;  
For our love has no set bounds, fair Gwen McKnett.

Love ends not with the tomb.  
Whate'er may be the doom  
Of those whose charms have won in this life here  
The true love of their kind,  
Will after earth's life find  
Love still lives and of all joys is the most dear.

But I must not, Gwen McKnett,  
Speak of death. Ah no, not yet  
Should this subject be discussed. There are, who knows,  
Weightier problems than this kind  
Which ofttimes engross your mind:  
Such as those deep ones that appertain to clothes.

Dress in all its sweet details—  
Ribbons, sashes, laces, veils,  
Bonnets, turbans, hoods and all styles of headgear;  
Seal-skin sacques and various wraps,  
Bustles, lingerie, and perhaps  
Some things whose names to me are not quite clear.

There are other thoughts no less  
As dear to womankind as dress:  
Now my pet is shrewd almost beyond her years,  
And well indeed she knows  
I speak now of the beaux,  
Without whom girlhood would dissolve in tears.

Without the men, O! what  
Would women do? Would not  
Their interest in dress itself be lost?  
Would they even care to live  
When every joy life has to give  
Drifts away upon its seas so tempest-tossed?

But this must never be,  
My Gwen's too fond of me:  
And—though it makes me jealous—yet I know  
She is fond of others too,  
And hence it would not do  
To banish men from one who likes them so.

Yes, you like us: don't deny  
The soft impeachment: really I  
Am aware of only one whom you do hate.  
The exception merely goes  
To prove the rule. Ah, Gwennie knows  
That her love for all the rest of us is great.

'Tis well that this is so;  
Hence we must never go  
And leave our pet disconsolate. Ah, how  
Can we expect elsewhere  
To find another maid so fair  
As the damsel at whose shrine we worship now?

No, we'll not leave you. How  
Could we forsake you now?  
A thing that cruel we can never do.  
'Twould surely be too mean  
To shake our little queen,  
When she is so devoted and so true.

No, no indeed, not while  
Our angel's winsome smile  
Gladdens the earth will men e'er wish to die:  
Nor while we men have your  
Approval, pet, I'm sure  
You will not want to bid us a good-by.

So we will tarry yet  
On earth, O! Gwen McKnett,  
And breathe the air you breathe, and feel the same  
Delightsome thoughts that rise  
When eyes gaze into eyes,  
And glad hearts glow with love's undying flame.

There will, methinks, be less  
Of mirth and joyousness  
Found 'mong strange saints in regions of the sky  
Than those which I do gain  
Right here upon life's plain,  
When that sweeter earthly saint—my Gwen—is by.

But some day I shall know,  
And when my time to go  
To that far land beyond approaches, my  
Last thought before I start  
Shall be of my sweetheart,  
Whom I'll meet again in that blest home on high.

There in that home we two  
May earth's happy ties renew:  
While other joys, that now we dream not of,  
Shall be ours, dear, for aye.  
Let us then be blithe and gay,  
And drink and sing and dance and pray and love.

Love especially, for this  
Is earth's supremest bliss,  
Within it are embraced the other four.  
Would our prayers ascend  
If love were dead, my friend?  
Would dance or song or drink please as of yore?

Would beaming smiles so grace  
That fair and radiant face  
If love were not thus lingering close by?  
That voice! O, would it still  
Its listeners enthrill  
Were love, triumphant now, to pine and die?

If love should take its flight  
Would those eyes be so bright?  
Would they beam so tenderly, my dearest girl?  
And, let me ask, would those  
Sweet terpsichorean toes  
Twirl so sprightly in the waltz's maddening whirl?

Not so, dearheart; therefore  
While Love is by to pour  
The sparkling wine, we'll take the proffered cup:  
And we will dance and sing,  
Aye, and make the welkin ring  
With the praises our full hearts shall offer up.

Should hearts like ours shrink  
E'en from a fresh grave's brink  
Because of doubts? Ah no, my precious dove.  
Death does not separate  
The lives sealed here by fate:  
The grave cannot obliterate earth's love.



The world is fair, look you.  
Flesh and the devil too  
Are also fair when love—the love we know—  
Idealizes them.  
So let us not condemn  
Aught that adds to life's pleasures here below.

Contrast, my Gwennie dear,  
A long and sad career  
With a short yet merry life, then tell me, do,  
Your preference; to me  
The latter seems to be  
In every way the better of the two.

I loathe a hypocrite.  
Give me your men of wit,  
Of liberal views, your bon vivants, by gad!  
Life was not made for tears,  
Nor foolish doubts and fears;  
It were better to be merry than be sad.

Be natural and admit  
Those feelings that may flit  
Across the mind: confess your tastes though they  
Be for rum, tobacco or  
For the lasses. It is more  
Commendable to walk on Truth's highway.

"With mirth and laughter let  
Old wrinkles come." I get  
These lines from him whom gods praise on their thrones.  
"Let my liver rather heat  
With wine," (I still quote, sweet,)  
"Than my heart cool with mortifying groans."



If generous living may  
Shorten our little day,  
And ere the wrinkles come we cross the line  
'Tween life and death—what then?  
Ah! we'll not be turned, sweet Gwen,  
From the table's richest dishes and its wine.

To Pleasure then, my own,  
I'll give my days: her throne  
Shall be the shrine at which I'll kneel me down:  
Her favors she'll confer  
On so true a worshiper:  
For me her face will never wear a frown.

I'll revel in her smiles,  
And as music, dear, beguiles  
My vagrant fancy she will tell me all  
Her choicest stories of  
That wondrous thing called love,  
And the joys that spring therefrom which never pall.

On flowery beds of ease  
I'll lie whilst listening to these  
Rare tales of love. Though 'twill be sweet to live  
In Pleasure's court, I'll miss  
Therein that greater bliss  
Which the presence of my Gwen alone can give.

For when away from her  
I, as one might infer,  
Am torn with grief. Hope, though, my spirit cheers  
As a radiant vision of  
The one girl whom I love  
Amid the circumambient gloom appears.

My sweeter life—the one  
Without which I'm undone.  
My dearer self, without whom ah! what were  
The world and all therein?  
What would my life have been  
If I had never on this earth met her?

She knows so well my ways,  
And blissful are the days  
Passed in each other's company: we throw  
Aside all worldly cares,  
And 'long life's thoroughfares,  
Hands joined and hearts aflushed with love, we go.

With joy's light in our eyes  
We walk 'neath sunny skies,  
The city streets celestial do appear.  
Our way, most beauteous friend,  
Through Elysium we wend;  
Each day that dawneth brings our souls more near.

There comes no prescience of  
A time when our love  
Will be dethroned. Naught can our lives estrange:  
No vandal's vengeful hand  
Can rend apart the band  
Which binds those hearts that time can never change.

The world is very bright  
And beautiful: I'm quite  
Sure woman makes it so. Her smiles afford  
A joy that makes life dear  
To man upon this sphere.  
An Eveless Eden we don't want restored.

O! why does my life seem  
So like a happy dream?  
Ah, Gwendolen McKnett, it is that you  
Have taught me how to love  
That now the skies above  
Are tinted with a brighter, tenderer blue.

Sweet are the flowers of spring,  
Sweet are the birds that sing  
Among the trees in balmy summer; sweet  
It is to listen to  
The laughter of the children who  
Play on the sands near where the seawaves beat.

But sweeter than all these  
Is the bright smile one sees  
On Gwendolen's fair face. How incomplete  
Would be this life to me  
If I should never see  
That happy face lighted with smiles so sweet.

There are too many stern  
And chilling visages, that turn  
The milk of human kindness into gall;  
By my Gwen's face ever shone  
With a radiance all its own,  
Diffusing blessings everywhere on all.

In the light of that dear face,  
With its rare and perfect grace,  
Who would not esteem it glorious to live?  
O! my spirit mounts on wings  
Far above life's grosser things,  
Whilst I contemplate this lot that fate might give.

So much of joy to gain!  
The thought inflames my brain:  
Parched is my throat and feverish my tongue:  
My legs (ah! pardon, pray—  
My limbs I meant to say)  
Seem to wobble, while my nerves are all unstrung.

A blest futurity  
By the side of Gwen! Ah me!  
The overpowering prospect makes me faint:  
My senses reel—I gasp,  
And in the dark I clasp  
The warm, fair, jeweled hands of my sweet saint.

Those firm yet gentle hands.  
Although in distant lands  
I'm called to roam, yet, dearheart, they will not  
Lose their power over me:  
No, those hands across the sea  
Would still exert an influence o'er my lot.

Reaching across the main,  
Those firm hands would restrain  
Me from undue excesses and, perchance,  
Endangering escapades  
With flirtsome foreign maids,  
In the gay metropolis of la belle France.

Those hands so kind and true.  
Unselfishly they do  
Their share in work that charity affords.  
Most blessed work, ah yes!  
Prompted by kindness,  
Not by hopes of future payments and rewards.

Those brave hands. Day by day  
Most diligently they  
Pursue their tasks, no duty do they slight.  
There's indeed a charm in those  
Slender fingers that enclose  
So tightly in their grasp a heart this night.

Those white and shapely hands.  
As their possessor stands  
In her loveliness, so proud and O! so great,  
Her adoring slave—myself—  
Would not for all earth's wealth  
Exchange his fetters for a freer state.

Those eager, clinging hands.  
What! I unloose the bands  
That they have fashioned 'round me strong and true?  
No, I hug the chains whose links  
Hold me a captive. Ah, methinks  
A love-wrought chain should last life's journey through.

Those hands so small, so soft,  
So skilled, so sure. How oft  
I've watched them deal the cards on nights when I  
At the round table met  
The poker-playing set.  
Ah, some of us went broke when stakes were high.

Who at times does not get left?  
From those dexterous, those deft  
And dainty digits we not always gained  
The bits of pasteboard for  
Which we finessed. We bore  
Like true gamesters, though, the losses we sustained.

It is well to be resigned  
To our fate. The much maligned  
Gaming-table teaches us how good a thing  
Resignation is: I'm told  
It should ever be extolled  
As a virtue worthy of acquiring.

Talking of virtues, let me state  
Here my darling's most marked trait—  
It is kindness. Ah, I have never heard  
That Gwendolen McKnett  
Has ever, ever yet  
Denied the lowliest one a kindly word.

A gracious smile bestowed  
Here and there along life's road  
On those less favored toilers we oft meet,  
Brightens full many a heart  
And displays a Christian's part,  
Which in after years may make our lives more sweet.

Kindness disarms our foes ;  
Thrice blessed the heart that knows  
Its presence. O ! it moveth one to do  
Acts that comfort and make glad  
Many who might else be sad  
Oftentimes in passing life's rough places through.

Never yet were kind words lost.  
And how little do they cost !  
Yet there are those who prize them more than gold.  
These remarks are trite no doubt,  
But truth redeems them, and without  
Any impropriety truth may be told.



He who would for no real cause  
Refuse a beggar who implores  
A crust of bread, is no worse than the one  
Who, without a reason, could  
Withhold a word that might do good.  
Yet men, and women, too, these things have done.

Strange—yes, strange is this phase  
Of character. Men's ways  
At times seem scarcely human: some appear  
Dead to that sense of good  
In our common brotherhood—  
Which other, happier natures find so dear.

Brothers, in a sense, we are—  
A truth divine, and yet how far  
From all its goodly lessons we oft stray:  
The cold disdain, the haughty air,  
Ignoring those with whom we share  
The precious hours of each passing day.

“Man's inhumanity,”  
I'm quoting Burns you see,  
“Makes countless thousands mourn.” Was Robert too  
Severe? Ah! I'm inclined  
To think that we can find  
Men in our time whose hearts are kind and true.

In these late days one reads  
Of grand, heroic deeds  
Done; not as in the past when men waged war,  
And 'mid its deathbolts gained  
A fame, while others, slained,  
Lay in vast heaps on fields stained red with gore:



But deeds of valor done  
By men and women on  
The fair fields of these peaceful days. Ah yes!  
To benefit their kind  
How many we do find  
Who risk their lives in all true willingness.

Not in war's deadly strife  
For conquest's sake is life  
Best sacrificed: and we might clearly learn  
A lesson as we see  
How kindness can be  
More apt than hate a lasting fame to earn.

O noble lives! Has it  
Been meant for us to sit  
And idly dream, and leave unto the rest  
Life's duties? Should we shirk  
The blest and gracious work  
Of helping the downtrodden and distressed?

Now I am no moralist—  
Though 'twould seem so from the gist  
Of these passing dissertations—yet I say,  
With a reverence sincere,  
That kind Heaven must hold dear  
All courteous acts performed on Life's highway.

But a little while, and then  
We shall leave these scenes, my Gwen.  
The life that waits us yonder is not known.  
We are likely though, dear friend,  
To attain a peaceful end  
By kindly acts to those with whom we're thrown.

Whether at home, my gentle maid,  
 Or 'mid the busy scenes of trade,  
 In stores, in offices or on the street,  
 To stand aloof in chilly state  
 Is a thing I deprecate;  
 A benignity of manner is more meet.

So don your silken gown,  
 Look your prettiest; don't frown  
 On any one—smiles more become your face.  
 Be a sunbeam in whose rays  
 Your Cliff may bask these summer days,  
 A joy he is all willing to embrace.

Life at the best is short,  
 And therefore, pet, we ought  
 To cull its flowers in youth's gala time.  
 [Aint this sentiment put neat?  
 Do you get unto it, sweet?  
 You bet your life I don't get left on rhyme.]

I've got the thing down fine;  
 This "afflatus" called "divine"  
 I possess, love, in an eminent degree.  
 I am fly, and no mistake,  
 When called upon to wake  
 The tuneful spirit of true melody.

I am never at a loss  
 To express myself; of course  
 This fact is clearly shown in all I write.  
 Good verses are a treat—  
 Let me add, without conceit,  
 That mine always prove a wonder and delight.

In imagery I'm rich,  
And the forceful strength with which  
I grasp a subject causes much surprise.  
I can talk of love, of war,  
Call forth one's laughter, or  
Can bring the tears to sympathetic eyes.

I may with absolute  
Propriety refute  
The baseless charge of insincerity  
Formulated by a few  
Superficial readers, who  
Fail to see that I can think most seriously.

If I treat a solemn theme  
Rather lightly, if I seem  
Careless, even frivolous, is it fair  
To call me callous? Nay,  
I, as Tennyson might say,  
Understand "the depths of some divine despair."

Of life's disappointments I  
Have had very likely my  
Full share; hence I have suffered, and I might  
Therefore add I've learned to feel  
That life is earnest, stern and real,  
As is clear to all who read my lines aright.

I'm not always at my best,  
Even Homer and the rest  
Of my prototypes have nodded at odd times;  
But with frankness I assert  
That I'm generally alert  
At such times when my soul gropes around for rhymes.

I'm not satisfied with less  
Than perfection, and I press  
Ever onward with unfaltering steps along  
My way; and e'er life's close  
I may realize all those  
High ideals that I've immortalized in song.

Fame though, I now begin  
To see, is hard to win;  
There's no royal road thereto. What if I may  
Obtain the plaudits of  
The world? Alas! its love  
Is fickle, and it passes soon away.

"All is vanity." This view  
Of life may not seem true  
To your young optimistic mind: but then  
Solomon, who spake thus, may  
Have been right; for in his day  
He was, we know, the wisest of all men.

A criticism terse  
Was passed upon some verse  
Of mine once which I never have forgot:  
My critic was a bright  
And very erudite  
Young lady, and she said that I wrote—"rot".

Her calling my lines "bum"  
Drove me that day to rum.  
I failed, however, to obtain the cheer  
Sought for at many bars.  
Night with its myriad stars  
Saw me reel homeward filled with grief and—beer.

It cut me like a lash  
To have my lines called trash  
By one so pretty, gifted, and so wise.  
In fact, I was so stung  
That, being rather young,  
I registered beneath the darkling skies

A vow that some day I  
Would show the world that my  
Effusions were, if not perhaps sublime,  
At least not quite as bad  
As my fair critic had  
Declared with so much hauteur at the time.

Her accentuated air  
Of disdain when laying bare  
The imperfections of my verse, caused me,  
More than aught else, to take  
An oath that I would make  
My name known in the world of poesy.

Now doubtless this may strike  
One as most Byronic like.  
Attacks of Scotch Reviewers, we are told,  
Spurred Byron on to fame;  
Immortal is his name,  
While his Scotch foes in unknown graveyards mould.

My case is different, I  
Was really goaded by  
A young girl's strictures into writing rhyme.  
I've not yet achieved renown;  
Fame's imperishable crown  
May, however, grace that brow of mine sometime.

I wield a facile pen  
 As you well know, my Gwen ;  
 It responds so to my will and ne'er grows tired.  
 It really seems at times  
 To anticipate the rhymes  
 That come thronging in my mind when I'm inspired.

Often at midnight, when  
 The world's asleep, my pen  
 Records the thoughts that may, when I am dead,  
 Bring me posthumous fame,  
 And keep alive my name  
 'Mong those whose lives my words have comfortéd.

Sometimes in life's routine  
 Certain incidents, I ween,  
 Of a nature not to be divulged, occur :  
 Hence I'm under, so I feel,  
 No compulsion to reveal  
 Any happenings of such a character.

Take that time when we—but I  
 Would of course much rather die  
 Than state the circumstance ; so have no fears,  
 Safe in your Clifford's breast  
 The secret, love, shall rest,  
 Never to be whispered into mortal ears.

Close-locked forevermore  
 Within my bosom's core  
 Is that occasion when we grew—ah well,  
 Somewhat overbold, I fear,  
 A chaperone not being near,  
 And we, ahem ! we—no, I mustn't tell.

No, I'll not allude to that  
Delicious time when we two sat  
Cheek by jowl upon the self-same Morris chair,  
How with one impulse our—well,  
This is not a thing to tell,  
And I'll ne'er disclose what happened then and there.

O moments of delight  
When lips with lips unite!  
Of them I durst not even dimly hint.  
Those moments, I opine,  
Are too sacred and divine  
Ever to be recorded in cold print.

I've surely had no lack  
Of joys: in looking back  
On life I mark how brightly they appear.  
Indeed, I question much  
If e'en in heaven there's such  
Ecstatic bliss as I have known here.

Dost doubt the truth of this?  
Why I have had the bliss  
Of knowing you; sometimes you've been to me  
Most kind. Therefore need I  
My statement qualify?  
No, it should stand; 'twas made advisedly.

A library were too small  
To hold a tithe of all  
That I might say. Time doesn't quite allow  
Recording fully here  
The chief events of my career;  
I shall speak of them anon, but not just now.



Aided and abetted by  
The Muse of Poesy, I  
Shall in majestic phrases soon be heard.  
I'll describe the deeds I've done,  
My amours, the conquests won—  
All of which have made my name a household word.

Yes, I shall—but bless me, Gwen,  
I am digressing. When  
I started on these stanzas, be it known,  
It was my intention to  
Tell of those sweet traits that you  
Possess—and I've dwelt mainly on my own.

Well, it can't be helped you know ;  
The thing is done, although  
I deplore somewhat my strange forgetfulness.  
But at a future time  
I may probably in rhyme  
Dilate upon the charms that you possess.

I shall let my fellow men  
Know the virtues of my Gwen—  
Of her kindness, her charity, and all  
Her rare qualities of mind  
And of person. Yes, I find  
That precious parcels always do come small.

O ! it's I who'll write the song  
The world has waited for so long,  
And it's you, dearheart, who will the song inspire.  
Ah, the Muse will lend her aid  
While the charms of such a maid  
Are sung with all a lover's wonted fire.

With this song, then, in view,  
I'm better able to  
Draw to a close these rambling rhymes: therefore  
I bid you, Gwen McKnett,  
Goodbye: or, rather, let  
Me say—it is more fitting—Au revoir.

To W. A. C \* \* \* \* \*—that broad-minded and genial philosopher, that accomplished man of letters, of business, of sentiment and of the world—this poem is affectionately dedicated.

I am a drummer—pray don't shrink,  
I never swear, nor lie, nor drink :  
I am, as one might say, the pink  
Of pure perfection, " I don't think " .  
Yes, I'm the boss exponent of  
All that is worthy of one's love.  
Though not a saint, I claim to be  
A model of propriety :  
My faults are few, my virtues are,  
Ah yes! too numerous by far  
To mention here ; besides, just now  
My modesty will not allow  
A revelation of the same.  
Some day when my distinguished name  
Is blazoned on the Roll of Fame,  
Those striking attributes of mine  
Will all be known, I opine ;  
And men in every land and clime,  
Who love the mighty and sublime,  
Will with profound amazement hear  
The story of my strange career :  
They'll marvel when the tale is told  
Of acts so daring and so bold.  
Heroic acts are bound to gain  
The world's applause, hence I'll obtain,  
Ere many years have onward whirled,  
The praise of an enraptured world ;  
My due of course, no more, no less,  
As I may frankly here confess.  
Yes, when my virtues are revealed

All other heroes in the field  
Must stand aside ; I am the one  
Who shall be styled Earth's favorite Son,  
Before whom lesser lights will pale,  
Or pass into Oblivion's vale.  
Ah yes ! indeed, posterity  
Without a doubt will hear of me :  
'Twill know me as a man of deeds,  
Who sold Root-beer, and Plows, and seeds,  
And unadulterated ( ! ) spice,  
And Beans, and Oats, and " Death-to-Lice ".  
( Parenthetically here  
I'd say this of the seeds and beer :  
That while the seeds would germinate,  
The beer would not intoxicate.)  
Posterity, as it surveys,  
With retrospective glance, these days,  
Will note how great a part I played  
Upon the busy marts of trade :  
'Twill catch on to the fact that I  
Was most particularly fly,  
Yet at the same time will agree  
That there were never flies on me.  
This seems a most felicitous stroke  
Of paradox combined with joke.  
Well, 'tis a way I've got sometimes  
Of intermingling with my rhymes  
Such quaint conceits. I might do worse  
Than this when dipping into verse.  
But I digress. My vagrant Muse,  
Whose bidding I cannot refuse,  
Allures me from the beaten track  
To which I now must hasten back.  
But, in resuming, I shall drop

Commercial subjects. Why talk shop?  
Business, with which I've thus far dealt,  
Has its attractions, but I've felt  
Within me certain thoughts more dear  
Than those called forth by seeds or beer.  
From traffic's sordid strife I turn:  
For other things my soul doth yearn.  
On History's impartial pages,  
Recorded for all future ages,  
Those grander qualities of mine  
Will with resplendent lustre shine:  
I, in a sense, will live away.  
What boots it if my confined clay  
Crumbles to elemental dust?  
For me there'll be the sculptured bust,  
Which, in Fame's Temple broad and high,  
The loftiest niche will occupy:  
And hero worshipers will throng  
Around its base with gladsome song;  
They'll deck my brow, my brow so classic,  
(Which then, alas! will be but plastic,)  
With wreaths of laurel, while they gaze,  
Spell-bound, upon the bust for days.  
My grave (and I say now and here  
I contemplate it without fear)  
Will be the Mecca, so to speak,  
Of multitudes, who fain would seek  
For hope that might uplift the race,  
For inspiration and for grace.  
The tears of women will be shed  
Because of the illustrious dead;  
Their knight is gone, their eyes will dim  
Because of him, because of him.  
With fairest flowers they will cover

The tomb of gallant knight and lover.  
How sacred doth a flower appear  
On which hath dropp'd a woman's tear.  
Flowers! the fragrant token of  
Respect, of friendship and of love.  
Emblems they are that sweetly show  
The better side of life below.  
A rose fixed in a woman's hair  
Adds to the glory one sees there:  
And fitting is it that the bay  
Should crown the hero of the day.  
Can one who gazes on a flower  
Be doubtful of a higher power  
Than that of man's? Nay, no sane mind  
Writhes with a doubt of such a kind.  
How beautiful this earth of ours—  
Blest with woman! blest with flowers!  
We men who love them both should give  
Our heart-thanks now because we live.  
I have a rose—a faded rose;  
I value it because of those  
Dear days it calls to mind; ah me!  
Days when I had a friend, but she  
Has passed from out my life, and now  
I feel its loneliness somehow.  
I grieve; it is—as you infer—  
Because of her, because of her.  
But grieving, look you, is all folly:  
Away, away with melancholy.  
The Jester's cap and bells for me,  
And merriment and melody.  
I meant not to have struck a chord  
Disclosing grief; and if I've bored  
The reader of these lines, I ask



Forgiveness. Henceforth I shall bask  
In the glad light of Pleasure's smile;  
My heart must not break yet awhile:  
What if a canker's gnawing there,  
I know how to be quit of care.  
Not by the cutting short of life,  
Not by the shot-gun, nor the knife,  
Nor by the poisoned draught: these means  
Of leaving life's tumultuous scenes  
May suit some wretches, but for me  
The journey towards the tomb shall be  
The longer way: this will best suit  
My taste, and hence I'll take that route.  
I'll trip along my tombward way  
With lightsome heart and spirits gay:  
I'll play the races, yes, I'll back  
The favorite runners on the track:  
I'll haunt those gorgeous places where  
I am assured the game is square:  
When stakes are high I'll take a hand,  
I have the necessary sand.  
To cards, however, I'll resort  
When not engaged in other sport.  
Gaming of course excites the brain,  
But 'tis too quiet, I maintain,  
For one convivial like me:  
I crave hilarious revelry.  
Where woman, song and wine abound  
I shall most usually be found.  
My life will be a merry one,  
If shortened—well, what harm is done?  
I'll go the pace, you may depend,  
Unto the end—unto the end.  
In gilded halls I'll oft be found,



And, when the flowing-bowl goes 'round,  
I'll drink therefrom. Who can withstand  
That draught when woman's jewelled hand  
Dispenses it? A woman's will  
Is law to man: so let her fill  
The glass, we'll drain it for her sake,  
If not our own. Yes, we will take  
The proffered cup; we'll drink to her,  
We'll sip the wine, but will prefer  
The sweeter and more thrilling sips—  
The nectar, look you, of her lips.  
The man who will not when he may  
Is but a dolt, a chump, a jay,  
A namby-pamby mountebank,  
A cad, a pusillanimous crank.  
Pah! he is 'neath contempt, and so  
I'll check my scorn—I'll let him go.  
I turn to woman, without whom  
This life on earth were one of gloom.  
Woman, thy worth we recognize—  
We men, and, gazing in thy eyes,  
A grateful prayer comes to our lip  
For thy endeared companionship:  
For thy sweet ways, for thy true heart,  
For all—ah yes! for all thou art.  
Alas! it is not mine to tell  
The thoughts that now within me well:  
Too feeble are my pen and tongue.  
Let abler poets, who have sung  
Of worthy themes, now gladly raise  
Their tuneful notes in woman's praise:  
Let them essay the happy task;  
To live and love is all I ask.  
Ah! are there greater joys above

Than this: to live, to live and—love?  
To live and love! But come, I meant  
Not to indulge in sentiment.  
I am a man of moods, you see;  
Believing in variety,  
Which is the *spice* (the pun forgive)  
Of life: and one should rightly live.  
One in the spice line learns a deal;  
More than 'tis proper to reveal.  
Of human nature I have made  
A study: it is well in trade  
To read men's minds in order to  
The likelier make sales, look you.  
It showeth genius (or else cheek)  
To sell a man a pound of leek  
When he wants beans, but this I've done  
Full oft. The fact is I have won  
Distinction as a hypnotizer.  
Last week I sold an Atomizer  
To one who wanted Cloves: this will  
Show my surpassing business skill.  
A man besought me on his knees  
For Corn once; I sold him Peas.  
I could no doubt with equal ease  
Have booked his order for Swiss Cheese.  
And did the peas ap-*pease* the buyer?  
No, but you see my fee was higher:  
Or, technically speaking, my  
"Commission" was somewhat more high.  
My mission in the world is to  
Obtain com-*mission*—which I do.  
My heart, which melts where love prevails,  
Is adamant when making sales.  
That piteous cry for Early Corn

I treated with supremest scorn.  
Now it is well to mention here  
A fact which doubtless may seem queer.  
'Tis this: that I in love affairs,  
More than in selling sundry wares,  
Obtain my greatest triumphs: yes,  
As well as my chief happiness.  
The man who is successful in  
The business world is sure to win  
Success in love: and this is so,  
As my experiences show.  
Think not that I have never felt  
The master passion. Ah! I've knelt  
At Beauty's shrine: I've worshiped there,  
And felt the while that life was fair  
And worth the living. Yes, to me  
Has come love's thrill of ecstasy;  
And 'neath its spell my soul hath soared  
To taste of joys in heaven stored.  
I am, you see, a man of parts;  
But it is in the game of hearts  
I most excel: there my forte lies,  
Hearts are the trumps and mine the prize.  
My play is brilliant, strong and bold;  
The winning cards I always hold:  
I crush my rivals, and, of course,  
Their fate fills me with no remorse.  
Love's tournament is not for boys:  
They who contest for its high joys  
And for its favors must possess  
Man's virile force and sturdiness.  
The youth of adolescent age  
Must step aside while men engage  
In royal competition for

The favors Beauty has in store :  
In store for him whose deeds proclaim  
A hero worthy of the name.  
A woman's smile may be the prize—  
A smile that beams forth from her eyes ;  
And for that smile men venture all.  
A life—the sacrifice is small—  
Is lost. Why not? the prize is high  
And men will do, and dare, and die.  
“ Our ends are shapened,” says Shakespeare,  
“ By destiny.” The Bard, I fear,  
Is right, alas! Man who is born  
Must live his life: work, love, and mourn  
Until his little day has fled  
And he is numbered with the dead.  
We are but puppets in Fate's hands,  
And needs must do as she commands.  
But stop—I'm sermonizing now ;  
A serious mood has seemed somehow  
To come upon me, and I find  
My usually careless mind  
Filled for the nonce with thoughts that make  
The stoutest mortal sometimes quake.  
Death—dreadful thought! And yet there is  
A something in the thought, I wis,  
Not all unpleasing. Death! ah, we  
Have no real cause to shrink from thee.  
Rest for the tired heart and brain  
Thou bringeth. Is not this a gain?  
Does death end all? It cannot be:  
Nay, it but sets the spirit free.  
Thus we are taught: it may be so,  
But do we know? Ah! do we know?  
Go ask the mitred priest, and he

Will discourse on futurity  
As glibly as I do on seeds.  
(He talketh well, this man of creeds.)  
But does he know? List! hear him tell  
About a heaven and a hell.  
With much ecclesiastic grace  
He vividly describes each place.  
I sit and marvel in my pew,  
I ask can such ideas be true.  
I'm not a scoffer: I respect  
All earth's religions; they direct  
Their votaries to live aright,  
Which is most proper; I am quite  
Convinced of *that*. The point with me—  
A stumbling block as you will see—  
Is this: to which should I belong?  
If one be right, the rest are wrong.  
Which of these many faiths is the  
True, Simon-pure, correct one? See?  
Am I to clap me on the chest  
And boast that I possess the best?  
I may laud spices, but the line  
I always draw at things divine.  
'Tis natural that a man should cling  
To early teachings; years may bring  
Increase of knowledge, new ideas,  
New thoughts, new truths, and with the years  
His mind will broaden: he will change  
In all things save (nor is this strange)  
Those theologic views which he  
Imbued beside his mother's knee.  
Now I, who am conservative,  
Am likely while on earth I live  
To hold fast, as indeed I ought,

To that belief in childhood taught:  
It may be false, but who dare wrest  
A pleasing fancy from one's breast?  
It matters little just what are  
My views religious, it is far  
From my intention to narrate  
My private notions: I'll but state,  
In brief, that I am what I am—  
"The Church" may bless, perhaps may damn  
Me for my independence here.  
Well, well, her damns I do not fear.  
E'en threats of excommunication  
Don't signify in our free nation:  
In Spain they might, but we're too wise  
To let such measures terrorize.  
The conscience, mark you, is the thing,  
Not the commands of pope or king,  
To which all should defer. Ah! then  
Joy will illumine the lives of men.  
Now man, thank God, has every right  
To think according to his light:  
To use his reason, small or great,  
Unhindered by the Church or State.  
The world improves: there was a time  
When views like these were deemed a crime;  
The conscience then was overawed  
By viceroys, so-called, of the Lord.  
Presumptuous man! upon my word,  
This claim is almost too absurd:  
Its arrogance quite shocks us, while  
Its rich grotesqueness makes us smile.  
The wanton blaspheme of the claim  
Should bring, methinks, the blush of shame  
Upon the cheeks of those who try



To bolster up the olden lie.  
Now I respect, as I have said,  
All earth's religions, yet I'm led  
To speak sometimes in language strong  
Of dogmas that are clearly wrong. .  
It is with no unkindliness  
That I these various views express.  
I love my fellow men and would  
Do them a service, if I could.  
I'd rid their minds of ghostly fears,  
Their lives of doubt, their eyes of tears:  
I'd strike a blow, in my small way,  
'Gainst superstition's deadly sway.—  
But I diverge: the fact is I  
Am what I am because of my  
Past training. It is so with all.  
Early surroundings, which they call  
Environment, has much to do  
With one's belief through life: how few  
Are the exceptions! Now just here  
Is food for thought, for it is clear  
That had we been in Turkey bred,  
We'd be Mohammedans instead  
Of what we are. Ah me! the more  
One studies theologic lore  
In this and in far distant lands,  
The less one really understands  
Its mysteries. Should this not teach  
That tolerance is best to preach?  
Best still to practice? Why should men,  
In that which is beyond their ken,  
Be so cock-sure? Ah, is it wise  
For any one to dogmatize?  
Who knows? who knows? And—but no more,





Strange fancies, and perhaps believe  
In their reality. Why not,  
If doing so should cheer his lot?  
To meditate is not unwise,  
And I need not apologize  
For having built, as dreamers do,  
Air castles in the ether blue:  
For having tasted of a bliss  
Not known in a world like this.  
Sometimes, as has been intimated,  
I get transcendently elated.  
Not in a bacchanalian sense:  
Nay, that were too rank an offense.  
I mentioned on the second line  
How I abhor a drink like wine;  
That fact I would reiterate,  
I'm most abstemious—"this is straight".  
Therefore I mean not that elation  
Arising from inebriation,  
The word as used here is "symbolic";  
I mean no spirits alcoholic.  
I speak of spirits to be sure,  
But ah! they are those sweet and pure  
Emotions of the soul within,  
Free from all grossness and from sin:  
The subtly sweet esthetic kind—  
The exaltation of the mind.  
The rapture of a hope which fills  
One's being with ecstatic thrills:  
A soul, look you, in whose depth lies  
A dawning sense of paradise:  
The sentiments so true and real  
Which only higher mortals feel.  
Ah! would it smack of vanity

Were I to say they come to me?  
I've felt their force—the force of these  
Rare sentiments. Beneath a tree's  
Cool shade in spring I've sat and found,  
While gazing on the scene around,  
A joy and peace I may not tell.  
Ah yes! and I remember well  
Days (happy days they were to me)  
Spent by the ever-sounding sea,  
Days of a summer that were blest  
By one whose friendship I possessed:  
My gentle friend of days long gone,  
And now—I mourn: yes, now I mourn.  
I mourn, as you again infer,  
Because of her, because of her.  
But it is not all grief with me,  
My friend still lives—in memory.  
I see her now, I clasp her hand,  
I walk with her along the strand,  
I hear again her glad, low voice—  
And I rejoice; yes, I rejoice.  
The past—in thought—again is mine.  
Need I repine? Need I repine?  
My memory is haunted by  
The spirit of dead days. Yes, I  
Here in the gloom do mind me when  
I dreamt love's dream; and now again  
I dream, but not as once I did  
In hopeful years: yet still, amid  
Life's later cares and duties, may  
Not hopes and dreams illumine our way?  
And so, in soberer manner, I  
Now hope and dream. Perchance a sigh  
Escapes my lips sometimes—ah, well!

The cause of it I need not tell.  
Sighs are not always notes of woe.  
A longing sad yet sweet may show  
Its presence by a sigh: and who  
Would wish such longings stilled? How true  
It is that we ofttimes find more  
Of happiness in longing for  
An object than we seem to gain  
By its possession. Joy and pain  
Are strangely joined. Anticipation  
Means more than does realization:  
There is in one a sweet unrest  
That adds to life a buoyant zest.  
To have, to gobble up, to sit  
Surfeited at Life's feast—well, it  
Is not, methinks, the happier lot.  
But hold, but hold! Ah, is it not  
Wrongful—most wrongful thus to let  
These thronging sentiments upset  
My calmer purpose? I should strive  
To check their sweep. Yet I derive  
A pleasure in their unchecked course:  
For O, look you, I feel their force—  
The force, as I have said, of these  
Rare sentiments. Beans, corn, peas,  
Spices, commissions, dollars, cents  
Cannot efface such sentiments:  
Cannot blot out that cherished store  
Of finer thoughts from my mind's core.  
And now to close: the hours have sped;  
It getteth late, I must to bed.  
Too long I've dallied with the Muse:  
Yet who will blame, who will abuse  
A plain, commercial man this night

Because of his poetic flight?  
I have been frank, sincere and bold,  
And now my tale is almost told ;  
I've let my fancy stray, and much  
I've said about myself ; if such  
Has interested, well and good.  
Now, lest I be misunderstood,  
I mention that 'twas with the best  
Of feeling I my thoughts expressed.  
If I have wounded any one  
By aught I've written, said or done,  
I ask forgiveness. If I've play'd  
The critic's part, and, mayhap, made  
My strictures too severely strong,  
I crave a pardon for the wrong.  
In my room's quietude, where none  
Intruded, I perhaps have spun  
Too long a tale : well, it is one  
That has been told, for I have done.  
It is with kindest thoughts I dwell  
Upon the closing word—Farewell.

I must, because of advanced age,  
 Soon make my exit from life's stage.  
     I'll hate to part  
 From the Muse; leaving her, I'll find,  
 Rather distressing; I won't mind  
     Leaving Trade's mart.

In neither world—the world of trade  
 Nor that of Poesy—have I made  
     As yet a hit;  
 And few, few women and few men  
 Will miss me—really miss me when  
     These worlds I quit.

No one will care—not any one,  
 “When I” (to quote from Tennyson)  
     Put out to sea.”  
 It grieves me to know this, but still  
 'Twere best perhaps that no one will  
     E'er mourn for me.

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#### SEEDSMEN AND POETS.

Business and rhyming-men may thrive  
 When I no longer am alive.  
     Vast fortunes may  
 Be made by seedsmen, also by  
 The world's aspiring bards when I  
     Have passed away.

'Twill please me more than otherwise  
 To know when I'm in Paradise,  
     Or Jericho,  
 As it may happen, that seedsmen  
 As well as poets may e'en then  
     Gain fame and—dough.

My being absent from the scene  
 Will not in any way, I ween,  
     [“I ween” sounds well]  
 Grieve other bards and seedsmen. Who  
 Cares where it be that I go to—  
     Heaven or hell?

If I had wanted to I could  
Have penned more sonnets, odes and lays;  
But I forbore. I think I should,  
In consequence, receive some praise.

I might have perpetrated more  
Verses, but I desisted though:  
Or, as has been said, I "forbore".  
Hence I deserve some praise, I know.

Sins uncommitted—those that are  
Suppressed by our own will force—may  
Plead loudly for us at the bar  
Of justice on a future day.

Though often tempted to outpour  
My soul in song in those tense days  
When I kept books, yet I forbore.  
Such self-restraint was worth some praise.

Now I'm too old to hum the airs  
That visited my soul one time.  
The passing years with all their cares  
Nip, as it were, the roots of rhyme.

Romance and love and sentiment  
Must in youth's day on business wait.  
When youth has gone the years prevent  
Our testing life's joys. Such is fate!

Yet I have no regrets; nay, none.  
Life! I've enjoyed it; yes, and I  
Enjoy it still; 'twill soon be done,  
But I am not afraid to die.

I'm pleased to think that I displayed  
Such self-restraint in bygone days.  
Duty, not Love's call, I obeyed.  
Yes, really, I deserve some praise.



True, I at odd times sang of love;  
 My heart ne'er felt the strange thrill, though,  
 Of love's full force. I but sang of  
 That which 'twas never mine to know.

I academically dealt  
 With the great subject; though 'tis true  
 There have been times when I have felt  
 That I could love as others do.

I acted wisely. I forswore  
 Love and its lures in youth's wild days.  
 And so, as I have said before,  
 I certainly deserve some praise.

Yet sometimes I am conscious of  
 A want I cannot well define—  
 The loss of something (is it love?)  
 That never was nor can be mine.

But whyfore be downcast in these  
 Comparatively peaceful days?  
 Alone I sailed life's storm-swept seas,  
 And now—now I deserve some praise.

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### TIME TO STOP.

*Being the writer's final farewell to the Muse.*

I'm now more elderly than when  
 I worked (and rhymed) in that seed shop.  
 I can't write verse as I did then;  
 I am too old; 'tis time to stop.

To part from the Muse! O! it wrings  
 A poet's heart: the tears I drop  
 Would drown a world. Of all sad things  
 The saddest—nay, 'tis time to stop.

Farewell, O Muse! The dreams are o'er  
 Which I once dreamt in that seed shop.  
 I'd like to rhyme a little more  
 Just here—but no, 'tis time to stop.

Though I have always been a clerk  
 And bookkeeper, I never had  
 A special love for office work;  
 Something about it made me sad.

To add interminable rows  
 Of figures, to make bills, to strike  
 The balances—such things as those  
 I do not altogether like.

I ne'er did care for business or  
 For any mercantile pursuits,  
 Yet many years I kept books for  
 A wholesaler in nuts and fruits.

I never had the nerve to break  
 From office trammels. Weak of will  
 And mediocre, I could make  
 No progress. I merely stood still.

And life—bright, glorious life swept by  
 The while I burrowed in a store,  
 And I beheld the friends of my  
 Youth gain the prizes they strove for.

Some gained renown, and others wealth.  
 Ah well! can one his fate control?  
 Gee! I'm unburdening myself.  
 Confession's good, though, for the soul.

Yes, I am frank. But then why not  
 Be frank? I suffer no regret.  
 I am contented with my lot.  
 And—well, I may be happy yet.

There is in mediocrity  
 No crime. At a desk I worked two  
 Score years most conscientiously.  
 I did the very best I knew.

From candy, nuts and fruits I went  
 Into the floricultural line;  
 But in a seed establishment  
 'Twas not intended I should shine.

I'm not in fruits now, nor in seeds,  
 Nor in aught else at present. I'm  
 Just looking for a firm that needs  
 A clerk who keeps books and can—rhyme.

“Now, we part,  
My songs and I. We part, and what remains?  
Perchance an echo, and perchance no more.”

—Owen Meredith.

I wrote rhyme for rhyme's sake ;  
I knew I could  
By writing it ne'er make  
A livelihood.

To me it was a fad,  
And nothing more ;  
In Poesy's realm I had  
No right to soar.

Rhyming to very few  
Proves lucrative ;  
For me it would not do ;  
I had to live.

And so I worked—well, I,  
That is to say,  
Kept books down town till my  
Hair became gray.

And yet a lifetime spent  
On trade's stern mart  
Ne'er has caused sentiment  
To quit my heart.

The rhyming knack I had,  
Also, it seems,  
A habit—which was bad—  
Of dreaming dreams.

Dreams! dreams! Mere dreams. But then  
How fair they were!  
Who would have blamed me when  
I dreamed of her?

Those dreams! They brought to me  
The joy of hope.  
No, I could never be  
A misanthrope.

Contentedly, down town,  
At keeping books,  
I worked, despite Fate's frown  
And coldest looks.

Time passed; youth's heyday waned  
And died; life nears  
Its end now. Hope sustained  
Me through the years.

Hope! Ah! her song yet stirs  
My soul; I hear  
Again that voice of hers;  
It still is dear.

Hope of—I know not what.  
A rest from care;  
Something to bless one's lot  
Here—or elsewhere.

And these vague dreamings of  
A better state  
On earth here or above,  
They kept me straight.

Not that rewards cajole  
Or penalties  
Affright the average soul  
In days like these.

If I have acted square  
'Twas not—well, let's  
Say not because of fair  
Words or loud threats.

I acted just as I  
Did—no, I'll drop  
This subject; 'tis too dry.  
I'd better stop.

Things occult I'll cut out;  
None cares to read  
Dreary remarks about  
A chosen creed.

It shows a want of tact  
To dogmatize  
On these last leaves; in fact,  
It is unwise.

Yet is it very wrong  
To muse o'er things  
And listen to that song  
Which fair Hope sings?

Oft in the summer, at  
The twilight time  
Of a fair day, I've sat  
Me down to rhyme.

And on vacations when  
A view I caught  
Of the wild sea, ah! then  
The Muse I sought.

Rare moments there have been  
When I've learned of  
Those joys that follow in  
The wake of love.

Beyond the city streets  
My soul has flown.  
Yes, life's supremest sweets  
At times I've known.

The products of my muse,  
Now gathered here,  
Who will care to peruse?  
But few, I fear.

The world's loss would be small,  
So I opine,  
Were I to burn up all  
This verse of mine.

And yet 'twas not to please  
The world I took  
The pains I did with these  
Rhymes in this book.

True poetry lovers care  
Not to peruse  
Verse in which tyros air  
Their shallow views.

Well, I too, I confess,  
Love verse, but know  
My limitations; yes,  
No one more so.

Yet I wrote verses! Why,  
Some one may ask.  
O just—er—because I—  
Er—liked the task.

For rhyme's sake, as I've said,  
I wrote these rhymes.  
[Will *she*, when I am dead,  
Read them—sometimes?]

Rhyming appears to me  
Harmless. Why twit  
Those, then, who chance to be  
Engaged in it?

Sore? By no means. Whyfore?  
This bantering wit  
I took in good part. Sore?  
No, not a bit.

I got off verses to  
Simply kill time.  
The world would not, I knew,  
Care for my rhyme.

Still, having done the same,  
I'll not consign  
To the devouring flame  
This book of mine.

My verse, I'm free to state,  
Perhaps is what  
Some might denominate  
As rhythmic rot.

Nought in unkindness, though,  
Is herein penned ;  
I have lampooned no foe,  
Much less a friend.

I have been frank—also  
Sincere. I might  
Have erred at times ; few, though,  
Are always right.

Regrets? I need feel none.  
What I have said  
Will, really, harm no one  
When it is read.

My rhymes may be thought poor  
And void of charm ;  
But they can not, I'm sure,  
Do any harm.



She whom, in dreams, I love  
Perhaps may look  
Within the covers of  
My little book.

Many a foolish line  
She'll find ; but here  
And there, though, Love's divine  
Truth will appear.

Hence, when she glances through  
These pages, she—  
My dreamlove—may learn to  
Love—yes, love me !

If this prove so, I need  
Not hanker for  
The world's praise ; no, indeed ;  
Hers is worth more.





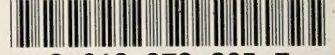








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